



Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) procedures
(www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp)

Stroud Valley Community Primary School fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding children and the importance of raising awareness of child protection issues. We discharge our responsibility with the attitude that ‘**it could happen here**’ where safeguarding is concerned. Any actions we take will be in the best interests of the child and compliant with the relevant statutory guidance. The role of school is to promote a child’s welfare.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers within the school.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Debbie Sleep (Headteacher); Sarah Heague (Deputy HT)
Joanna Haines (Pastoral Lead)

Safeguarding Governor –Rachael Scott

Safer Recruitment Trained – Debbie Sleep (Headteacher) Jackie Terry (Chair Of Governors) Sarah Heague (DHT);
Chris Minett and Julie Howe (Governors)

General principles

We recognise that because of our daily contact with children we are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse. We will:

- ensure adults are appropriately trained in the early identification of abuse and neglect and respond correctly;
- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- ensure children know there are adults in school who they can approach if they are worried;
- include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- take appropriate action in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare.

The school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. We understand that their behaviour may be challenging, defiant or show signs of being withdrawn

We endeavour to support all our children through:

- the content of our curriculum;
- our ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment in which all individuals are valued;
- a behaviour policy centred around positive reinforcement;
- ensuring they understand that although some behaviours are unacceptable they, as people, are valued. They are not, in any way, to blame for the experiences which may lead to such behaviours;

- liaison with all other agencies that support the child and family;
- ensuring that when a child leaves the school relevant information is passed to the new school immediately and the social worker informed.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- take action to enable children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding and child protection is the responsibility of everyone.

Our policy and procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and governors. It is important that we are fully aware of child protection issues as well as equipping our children with the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Keeping children safe is the responsibility of all staff, who should refer concerns of abuse or neglect to one of the DSL’s. If at any point there is immediate risk of serious harm to a child a referral will be made to children’s social care immediately. **Anybody can make a referral.** If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should escalate for re-consideration.

If you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm or is in immediate danger it must be reported to the Children and Families Services helpdesk – 01452 426565 or to the police – 101

When there are concerns about a child but not they are suffering or likely to suffer harm or is in immediate danger A conversation will be had with a DSL.; all concerns will be logged in written on CPOMS (software for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing and pastoral issues)

Child Protection refers to the activities taken to prevent children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Neglect is a form of abuse and its persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known sexting or youth produces sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nudes images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (page 17 of this policy provides further information on sexting)

Staff will not assume that someone else is taking action and sharing information that might safeguard a child. It is better that a number of people raise a concern than no-one simply because you think someone else will have.

Staff members understand the importance of NOT promising confidentiality to children and that they should always **act in the best interests of the child.**

The governments ‘information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners’ (July 2018) includes seven golden rules for sharing information and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. These can be found at the end of this policy.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they will consult a DSL.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

Confidentiality

When a child makes a disclosure we understand how to manage the situation to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care.

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding and fears about sharing information will not stand in the way of the need to keep children safe.

We will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- the local authority (LA)
- integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- the chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

Notifying Parents

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

We will be careful about what information we provide to each child / parent and work with the police/ social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

This policy is published on the school website and parents and carers understand the responsibility placed on the school for safeguarding children.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The responsibilities of the DSL are to ensure procedures are followed where abuse is suspected or disclosed, procedures of allegations management are followed and to keep professionals up to date with current guidance.

All staff, including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers are introduced to the DSL. Photographs and names of the DSL's are on display in the main entrance.

The school has three members of staff named as designated safeguarding leads. They undergo updated child protection training every two years. The DSL's do not delegate their responsibility to other staff.

A DSL will always be available for consultation on child welfare and child protection matters. In the event of all DSL's being away from the school premises at the same time, arrangements are made for one of them to be available by telephone. The school office holds the details of DSLs in our partnership schools who can also be connected if necessary.

A DSL will take an active role in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings such as core group meeting and child protection conferences

They will refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

The DSL's work closely together share issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The DSL will ensure that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

The DSL is responsible for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and schools networks to keep children safe on line.

All Staff

All members of staff know to follow the procedures set out by Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership and take account of the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. There is a poster in the staff room with the details of GSCB website clearly given.

School staff understand the difference between their general safeguarding duties, in identifying vulnerable children and considering the need for early help, and their particular child protection duties when they believe that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

The safeguarding policy is updated annually and all staff read it, along with Part One of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education and Annex A of this document. There is a copy available on the teachers shared drive, which all have access to as well as a hard copy in the staff room-

Staff who work directly with children also understand the content of Annex B – which is more detailed about specific safeguarding issues. A hard copy is kept in the staffroom for reference purpose and on the staff shared drive.

Staff understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities, as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE. This includes regular supply staff and volunteers. This includes how to manage the appropriate level of confidentiality, only involving those who need to know, and as a must the DSL. New staff receive a safeguarding induction within their first week, where they are provided with copies of Part 1 KCSIE and this policy; they are trained fully on the next available course.

If a child makes a disclosure we will:

- listen to and believe them.
- allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret. Tell the child that you will come back to them and let them know what is happening and ensure that you (or someone appropriate) does this
- write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- all records will be saved in CPOMS and the DSL alerted
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Staff should be able to reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The term 'victim' is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subject to abuse consider themselves a victim, or would want it described that way. When managing an incident we will use any term that the child feels comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrators and perpetrators(s) are also widely used and recognised terms. However it is important we think carefully about the terminology we use, as in some cases abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator as well.

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Staff should speak to the DSL as a first course of action.

This includes any concerns staff may have about a child's mental health. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

If you have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Training

Whole school staff training takes place every three years in line with 'Local Authority Guidance. DSLs complete their updates every two years.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates on an annual basis, including whistle blowing, allegations management, the acceptable user policy and online safety, filtering and monitoring.

The school purchases external safeguarding advice and updated alerts are sent directly to the HT e-mail inbox. This information is then shared with staff as appropriate.

The Headteacher

The HT is responsible for the implementation of this policy and ensuring all staff and volunteers understand the safeguarding systems as outlined in this policy. And that they understand the procedures to concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.

The HT will make sure this policy is communicated to parents through the school website.

The HT will act as 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse against another member of staff or volunteer.

The HT will make decisions regarding all low-level concerns, usually in conjunction with another DSL.

The Role Of The Governing Body

The GB will review this policy on an annual basis and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation

They understand their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One/ Part Two and specific governors will read sections pertinent to their roles; those involved in recruitment will read the safer recruitment section.

One member of the Governing Body is named as a link governor for safeguarding / child protection. That person will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and report to the FGB. S/he will meet with the Headteacher to complete the annual LA safeguarding review and ensure training is up to date.

The GB will ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes ensuring that the school is aware of the provision in place and understand the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training

This includes ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including time, funding, training, resources and support.

They will review *the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards*, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards

The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). There is a separate 'allegations against staff policy'.

The Chair of Governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher.

That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll) the governors will:

- seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed;
- make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life

The school identifies children who are vulnerable and who may benefit from 'early help', as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. A dedicated pastoral lead trained to the level of DSL works as an intermediary, where early help may be beneficial, in order to support parents and carers.

Any child may benefit from Early Help, however we are particularly aware of children who:

- are disabled and have specific additional needs
- have special educational needs (whether or not they have an Education, Health Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- if frequently missing / goes missing from care or from home
- is a risk of modern slavery, trafficking sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is mis-using drugs or alcohol
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child
- is a looked after child
- has a family member in prison or affected by a parent offending
- Is persistently absent from education including persistent absenteeism for part of the school day

Staff share information, in line with statutory guidance, with other relevant professionals, and in particular social care, in order to support early identification and assessment for early help. A culture of openness and vigilance within the staff group enables children and their families to be able to access early help in a timely and appropriate way.

If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL/ pastoral lead will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

The pastoral lead/ DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

Child Protection Plans

We fully support children, and families, who have a child protection plan in place. The school has good links with outside agencies, including children's services, involved with families and co-operate as required by them. The DSL, or appropriate member of staff, attends child protection conferences and core group meetings.

The school will notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a child who has a child protection plan.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

Looked After / Previously Looked After Children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe

Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements

The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to

Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

Adopted children and children subject to special guardianship or child arrangement orders, who were previously looked after.

The school is aware of the new duties contained in the Children and families Act 2014, which extends the role of the designated teacher and virtual school to the above group of children and have taken steps to prepare for this increased duty.

Children with SEN and / or disabilities

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEND) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline.

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying)
- the potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges;
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours.

Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the SENCO.

Types of Abuse

Alongside this policy document all staff have read, and access to a copy of Part One KCSIE

This document describes the different categories of abuse a child may suffer.

There are also links to information on specific safeguarding issues in KCSIE

- bullying, including on line bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- children missing education
- children missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- peer on peer abuse
- gender identity and sexuality
- gender based violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- honour based violence
- mental health
- missing children and adults strategy

- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- trafficking.

School staff know how to access more detailed government information and guidance and to discuss areas of concern with the DSL if any of these issues appear to arise.

Online Safety

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

A separate online safety / acceptable user policy / mobile

phone policy aims to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors; protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')

We aim to:

- have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, including volunteers
- protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

Our curriculum teaches children about:

- the safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- keeping personal information private
- how to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- how to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim

Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

We recognise that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

We will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy.

HATE

Gloucestershire launched its Hate Crime Strategy in October 2016,

Any incident of bullying perceived by the victim, or any other person, as having a prejudicial element (disability, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or gender) should be categorised as a 'Hate' incident. We understand that those who carry out these acts are unlikely to be motivated by 'Hate', and that often simply have a lack of awareness of the consequences of their actions. At Stroud Valley, we believe in teaching our children about the consequences of their actions, how they affect another's feelings and how to make positive choices in relationships. Incidents reported to us will be investigated and the conflict resolution part of this policy carried out. Monitoring the prevalence of such instances however is a critical part of understanding the scale of the issue and evidencing the need for earlier intervention and prevention measures in tackling the harm motivated by prejudice, before such attitudes become embedded, and further harm is done.

As a school we have a duty to report incidents of 'Hate' to the Local Authority.

Extremism

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

Record keeping

All staff have access to CPOMS (Child Protection On Line Management System) and record any concerns in this format. The DSLs are alerted whenever something is recorded.

Records include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

If a child for with safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.

To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Equality

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. We understand that children may experience discrimination due to race, ethnicity, religion, disability gender identification or sexual orientation.

We are fully aware that some children have an increased risk of abuse, both on-line and off-line and some may have additional barriers when it comes to recognising or disclosing abuse.

These groups may include:

- children with special educational needs and / or disabilities
- young carers
- have English as a second language
- those living in difficult situations such as temporary accommodation; in circumstances where drug abuse or domestic violence is an issue
- at risk due to their own or family member's mental health
- looked after or previously looked after.
- are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage or radicalisation
- are asylum seekers
- are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods / repeat occasions.
- whose parents / carers have expressed an intention to remove them for home education

Safer Recruitment

When involved in recruitment we follow the guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education In line with government guidance. At least one accredited recruiter is on all interview panels and involved in the complete selection process. Guidance from Part Three of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' is adhered to fully.

No member of staff or volunteer in a regulated activity will be left alone with children until a DBS check has been completed, received and found to be clear.

Whistleblowing

The school has a separate whistleblowing policy which all members of staff are aware of. We all understand our duty to protect children and our responsibility to ensure unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed, using the Allegations Management Procedures. These can be found in the whistleblowing policy and on the GCSB website stated at the top of this policy. The NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline number is: 0800028 0285. All staff are aware of this service.

Allegations Management Procedures

If there are concerns about a member of staff or volunteer, or an allegation is made about a member of staff or volunteer posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Headteacher. If the concerns/allegations are about the Headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

The Headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in the allegations management policy.

If it is felt that the Headteacher does not take the allegation seriously then refer to the Chair of Governors. If an individual does not feel safe talking to the school or feels the school is not taking the allegation seriously they should contact Gloucestershire Safeguarding Partnership and speak to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO

All concerns including low level concerns which should be reported to the HT. The HT alongside another DSL in school will decide on actions including referring to the LADO for advice. All low level concerns will be recorded.

Safer Working Practices

The guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings can be found on the GSCB website in the safeguarding in education section.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body

Policy Review

Date Policy Ratified by Governors	October 2024
Committee Responsible	FGB
Date for next review	October 2025

Other relevant school policies:

Acceptable Use Policy

Anti bullying / conflict resolution

Attendance

Behaviour

Children Missing Education

First Aid Policy

Intimate care

Online safety

Monitoring and Filtering

Staff behaviour / code of conduct

Mobile phones

Whistle blowing

o

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Additional information on each of these and other issues can be found in KCSIE - Annex B

Child On Child Abuse

This is abuse which is perpetrated by children upon children.

It is taken very seriously by the school where we do not regard bullying or abuse as a natural part of the growing up process. Staff will not accept such abuse as 'banter' 'teasing' 'just having a laugh' 'boys will be boys' etc and will take action.

Even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here." Unless a zero tolerance approach is in place, there is a danger it could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment.

Most cases of children hurting each other will be dealt with through the schools behaviour policy / conflict resolution but if any allegations raise safeguarding concerns this policy will be followed.

If allegations from a child raise safeguarding concerns and the behaviours reported:

- is serious and potentially a criminal offence
- could put a child at risk
- is violent
- involves a child being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- involve sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment including indecent exposure, up-skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos.

If a child makes an allegation of abuse against another child tell the DSL but do not investigate it.

The DSL will contact the local social care children's services and take advice.

If the allegation involves a potential criminal offence the DSL will contact the police for advice.

A record of the allegation will be made.

The DLS will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved

Child on child abuse is most likely, although not limited to:

- bullying, including cyber bullying
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting etc; anything causing physical harm
- sexual abuse of one child by another
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks or jokes
- up skirting (now a criminal offence) which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing
- sexting

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
- ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- ensuring staff understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
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Working With Parents

We will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved and be careful about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will also work with the police /social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

We will be clear about what has been put in place to safeguard a victim, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed

We will also meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

Female Genital Mutilation

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

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs”.

It is also known as ‘female genital cutting; circumcision or initiation’

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting’ ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’

Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

This may either be when:

- a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or

- 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 that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

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 that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. In these situations the member of staff will talk through concerns with the DSL.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any **other member of staff** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This is a suggested approach based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety.

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images which are computer generated (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carer
- say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- if a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- if it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- what further information is required to decide on the best response
- whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)

- whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- if there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

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

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care.

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

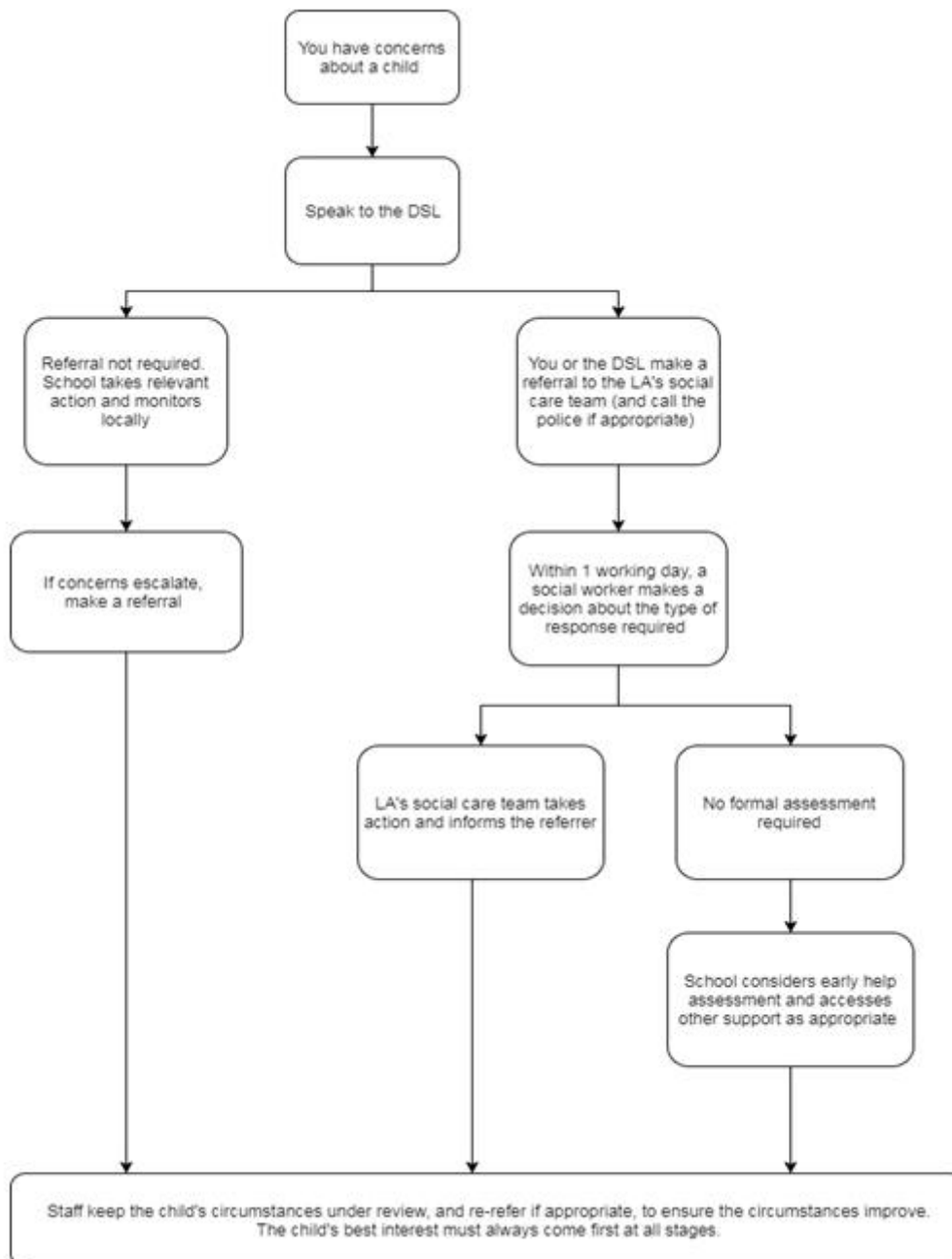
Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Flow Chart To Summarise Actions Required For Safeguarding



The Seven golden rules for sharing information (including personal information):

- All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect. Protecting a child from such harm takes priority over protecting their privacy, or the privacy rights of the person(s) failing to protect them. The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) provide a framework to support information sharing where practitioners have reason to believe failure to share information may result in the child being at risk of harm.
- When you have a safeguarding concern, wherever it is practicable and safe to do so, engage with the child and/or their carer(s), and explain who you intend to share information with, what information you will be sharing and why. You are not required to inform them, if you have reason to believe that doing so may put the child at increased risk of harm (e.g., because their carer(s) may harm the child, or react violently to anyone seeking to intervene, or because the child might withhold information or withdraw from services).
- You do not need consent to share personal information about a child and/or members of their family if a child is at risk or there is a perceived risk of harm. You need a lawful basis to share information under data protection law, but when you intend to share information as part of action to safeguard a child at possible risk of harm, consent may not be an appropriate basis for sharing. It is good practice to ensure transparency about your decisions and seek to work cooperatively with a child and their carer(s) wherever possible. This means you should consider any objection the child or their carers may have to proposed information sharing, but you should consider overriding their objections if you believe sharing the information is necessary to protect the child from harm.
- Seek advice promptly whenever you are uncertain or do not fully understand how the legal framework supports information sharing in a particular case. Do not leave a child at risk of harm because you have concerns you might be criticised for sharing information. Instead, find out who in your organisation/agency can provide advice about what information to share and with whom. This may be your manager/supervisor, the designated safeguarding children professional, the data protection/information governance lead (e.g., Data Protection Officer⁵), Caldicott Guardian, or relevant policy or legal team. If you work for a small charity or voluntary organisation, follow the NSPCC's safeguarding guidance.

- When sharing information, ensure you and the person or agency/organisation that receives the information take steps to protect the identities of any individuals (e.g., the child, a carer, a neighbour, or a colleague) who might suffer harm if their details became known to an abuser or one of their associates.
- Only share relevant and accurate information with individuals or agencies/organisations that have a role in safeguarding the child and/or providing their family with support, and only share the information they need to support the provision of their services. Sharing information with a third party rarely requires you to share an entire record or case-file – you must only share information that is necessary, proportionate for the intended purpose, relevant, adequate and accurate.
- .Record the reasons for your information sharing decision, irrespective of whether or not you decide to share information. When another practitioner or organisation requests information from you, and you decide not to share it, be prepared to explain why you chose not to do so. Be willing to reconsider your decision if the requestor shares new information that might cause you to regard information you hold in a new light. When recording any decision, clearly set out the rationale and be prepared to explain your reasons if you are asked.