



The
Bulmershe
School

INSPIRING POTENTIAL,
ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Issued July 2016

(amended January 2017 to include a new appendix on Recognising Signs of Child Abuse)

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR THE BULMERSHE SCHOOL

All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities in regard to safeguarding procedures through the publication of this policy on its website. Reference will be made to it in the school prospectus and home school agreement. If required, a paper copy can be obtained through the school office.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is in line with current legislation and government and local authority guidance, with particular reference to the DfE's *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Sept 2016) and the Wokingham District Council model safeguarding policy for schools. Any changes will require approval by the Full Governing Body.

Date of next review: July 2017

CONTENTS OF THE POLICY

1.	Safeguarding roles and key contacts	3
2.	Policy aims and principles	4
3.	Roles and Responsibilities	4
	3.1 The Governing Body	4
	3.2 The Safeguarding (etc) Governor	5
	3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Officer	5
	3.4 The Headteacher	5
	3.5 All staff	6
	3.6 Students, parents, etc	6
4.	Procedures	7
	4.1 General	7
	4.2 Concern about a pupil	8
	4.3 Allegation against staff member	8
	4.4 Who should I contact?	9
	4.5 Training & support	9
	4.6 Confidentiality	10
	4.7 Records & monitoring	10
	4.8 Safer recruitment	10
	4.9 Children missing from education	11
	4.10 Students on child protection register (or giving CP concern)	11
	4.11 Looked After students	11
	4.12 Young carers	12
	4.13 Students with disabilities	12
	4.14 Child sexual exploitation	12
	4.15 Female genital mutilation	12
	4.16 Forced marriage	13
	4.17 Radicisation/PREVENT	13
	4.18 e-Safety	13
	4.19 Lesbian, gay bisexual & transgender (LGBT)	13
Appendix A	PREVENT Safeguarding Objectives	15
Appendix B	Recognising signs of child abuse	16
Appendix C	Flowchart: procedure for safeguarding referrals	23

1. Safeguarding roles and key contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details	Date Training Undertaken
Designated Governor for Safeguarding and LAC	Sylvia Johnson	Contact via the Clerk to the Governors: mailto:dcook@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk	
Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding and LAC	Sarah Sharp	safeguarding@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk	
Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding	Andre Jordan	safeguarding @bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk	10 March 2016
LA Safeguarding Contact/LADO (Local Area Designated Officer)	Liz McAuley	0118 974 6141 0791 755 5495 LADO@wokingham.gov.uk	
Referral and Assessment Team – WBC Children’s Social Care		0118 908 8002 Email: R&ATeam@wokingham.gov.uk	
Access and Assessment Team – Reading Children’s Services		0118 937 3770 0118 937 3641 Email: GCSxMash.Team@reading.gcsx.gov.uk	
Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)	Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board Development Manager	Email: wscb@wokingham.gov.uk	
Child Exploitation and Online protection Centre (CEOP)		0870 000 3344 CAIU: 0845 8505505 https://ceop.police.uk	
Prevent Officer Thames Valley Police	Misha Upadhyaya	01753 506291 07467 444183 (mobile) Email: mailto:misha.upadhyaya@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk	

2. The aims of this policy

Our aim is to do all we can to protect and safeguard the wellbeing of our students.

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Our students have the right to expect us to provide them with a safe and secure environment. We acknowledge that teachers and other staff in our school are in a unique position to identify and to help abused and vulnerable children. We also recognise that the protection of our students is a shared community responsibility.

Principles

Our policy applies to all in our school community, namely students, staff, governors and volunteers.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring that we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our students
- Raising pupil awareness of child protection issues and equipping students with the skills they need to keep them safe
- Developing, and then implementing, procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse, and training staff to use these procedures effectively
- Supporting vulnerable students and those in difficult circumstances, as well as supporting those students who have been abused in accordance with their agreed protection plans
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and thrive.

We recognise that school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where our students feel safe and secure, and where they are encouraged to talk and are listened to seriously
- Ensure that our students know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty or concerned about one of their peers
- Include opportunities in the SMSC curriculum for students to develop the skills to recognise abuse and to stay safe, and also to include material to help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish working relationships with families and with colleagues from other agencies.
- Safeguarding staff will challenge and 'think the unthinkable'

We recognise that it is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that all elements of this policy are actively and consistently reflected in our practice. We will systematically monitor, evaluate and constantly review the impact of this policy.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body has the overall responsibility for ensuring the school has appropriate and effective arrangements to ensure the safeguarding of its students.

The Student Welfare & Safeguarding governor is the nominated governor for child protection. That person will be required to undergo training in safeguarding with refresher courses as appropriate. All other governors are recommended to undertake appropriate safeguarding training to ensure they understand the issues.

All governors are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

3.1 The governing body is responsible for ensuring that:

- the school complies with legislation related to child protection

- the school has a Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and that procedures are in place that safeguard and promote the wellbeing of students in our school
- this policy is reviewed annually
- the school is using safer recruitment procedures and that appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers
- the school is aware of its duties re PREVENT/Channel referrals in conjunction with the police/LA
- in particular that the school community has "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"
- Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures of the Local Authority

Governors not be given details relating to individual children protection cases or situations, to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

3.2 The named governor for Safeguarding, Child Protection and Children in Care is responsible for:

- maintaining regular contact with the school's designated child protection coordinator
- awareness of current responsibilities and requirements in relation to child protection by attending appropriate professional development activities
- receiving reports from the Headteacher on safeguarding issues and communicating these to the governing body.

3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Officer is a senior member of staff responsible for:

- the provision of leadership and vision in respect of child protection
- the practical implementation of the child protection policy in ensuring that child protection procedures are followed within the school and that appropriate referrals are made to the proper Social Care Services and other agencies
- the provision of training to all staff employed within the school so that they are aware of signs of abuse, what they need to do if they think that a pupil is being abused and how they can protect themselves from an allegation
- ensuring that staff have received the appropriate training
- the co-ordination of all activities related to child protection and children in care, including record keeping, school representation at child protection conferences and other related meetings, supporting students at risk, liaison with other professionals, and the monitoring of welfare and academic progress
- liaison with the leadership team and governors
- maintaining awareness of PREVENT/Channel referrals in conjunction with the police/LA guidance
- monitoring effectiveness of child protection policy and procedures.

3.4 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- supporting the Designated Safeguarding Officer in all aspects of the role
- ensuring that the Designated Safeguarding Officer has received the appropriate training
- ensuring that all members of the school community are aware of and comply with policy
- ensuring the safe recruitment of all staff (including supply staff and volunteers)
- making parents aware of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy
- dealing with any allegations against members of staff or volunteers
- creating a safe environment for students at the school

- attending PREVENT training/implementing recommendations including re Channel referrals
- reporting on safeguarding to the governing body.

3.5 All staff are expected to:

- know the names of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputies
- understand and comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy
- have read 'part one' of 'Keeping children safe in education'
- deal with any bullying incidents that may occur, following proper procedures
- refer e-safety concerns
- behave in accordance with our Staff Conduct Policy, which is given to all staff annually
- be aware of our obligation to pay "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism."

3.6 Students, parents/carers, casual staff, contractors and volunteers are expected to be aware of and comply with the school's child protection and conduct policies.

4. Procedures

4.1 Procedures - General

This policy, and all action relating to it, is in line with the following statutory and other guidance:

- The Education Act 2002
- Keeping children safe in education (September 2016)
- Working together to safeguard children (DfE 00130 - 2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- PREVENT and Channel duty guidance (June 2015)
- What to do if a child is being abused (March 2015)
- Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex
- Model Policy: Safeguarding & Promoting the Welfare of Children & Young People, Wokingham Borough Council (Sept 2016).

Staff will be kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings, the staff bulletin and awareness training.

All new staff will attend a training session on child protection awareness as part of their induction programme as well as receiving our Staff Conduct Policy and Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Where other adults are working in the school alone with students, the Headteacher or the Deputy Head (Staff Development) will ensure that they are aware of the contents of these policies. Any trainee teachers will receive a training session on child protection awareness as soon as possible after their arrival.

4.2 Concern about a pupil

- Anyone who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation of abuse or who suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer using the proforma; in their absence the matter should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or the most senior member of staff in school. See Appendix B.
- It is important to remember that any member of staff can refer their concerns to children's social care directly. Staff must take further action if they feel the school has not acted appropriately or robustly to safeguard. This may involve reporting to the Chair of Governors or direct to LADO, Social Care or Police.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or an allegation of abuse to the relevant investigating agency
- Where the allegation is against a member of staff, the Headteacher must first be informed
- If the designated child protection co-ordinator (or one of the safeguarding team) is unsure about whether a formal referral should be made or has a general concern about a child's health or development, advice should be sought from local social care

We will inform parents/carers of our actions **unless it is our view that so doing could place the child at greater risk of harm** or could impede a criminal investigation.

We will inform parents and carers about our duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures.

4.3 Allegation against a member of staff

- It is essential that our high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse are similarly displayed when adults working in school are accused, no matter how difficult this may be

- Corporal or physical punishment of children in schools is unlawful. Physical restraint of children is only permitted if the child or others are at risk. Excessive physical restraint or constant shouting may constitute abuse
- If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the Headteacher (or her deputy in her absence) should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and LA. They will decide whether the incident should be referred to social care and/or the police
- Should the allegation be against the Headteacher, a deputy or the Designated Safeguarding Officer should contact the LADO and then inform the Chair of Governors
- Any member of staff who is concerned about the conduct of another member of staff or adult on the school premises should contact the Headteacher as part of our whistleblowing procedures

4.4 Who should I contact?

An employee of the school, or any other person covered by the Act, who has serious concerns about any aspect of the school's or Council's work, should in the first instance raise their concerns using one of the following methods:

- Inform Line Manager or Headteacher

In many cases, raising concerns with the immediate line manager is the most appropriate route for an employee. The line manager should inform the Headteacher of the disclosure and an appropriate course of action should be agreed. If this is not a suitable option (for example because the issue may implicate the manager or if the concern has been raised but remains unaddressed) the concern should be raised directly with the Headteacher.

- Chair of Governors

If an employee's concern is about the Headteacher, this should be raised with the Chair of Governors, Dr Peter Miskell, on 0785 772 5765.

- Dedicated Whistleblowing Communication Channels

o Wokingham Borough Council has established a dedicated 24-hour answer phone hotline for receiving disclosures. The hot line number is 0118 974 6055;

o Post addressed to Confidential Whistleblowing, Investigations Team, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN; or

o In person at Shute End by asking for Investigations Team at reception.

4.5 Training and support

The Headteacher will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Officer undertakes the necessary child protection training and that this is updated at intervals recommended by the LA.

The designated lead (or a member of the safeguarding team) will offer child protection awareness training as part of the induction package for all staff and teaching trainees. She will also raise awareness of child protection issues as necessary at briefings.

This training should raise awareness of child protection issues, clarify the actions to be taken if abuse is disclosed, alleged or suspected and also encourage staff to keep themselves as safe as possible from an allegation being made against them.

Such training must be 'regularly' updated; however at The Bulmershe School every member of staff has refresher training at the start of the new school year, as well as on-going briefings throughout the year i.e. to share lessons learned.

4.6 Confidentiality

- All staff must understand that the only purpose of confidentiality is to benefit the student. No one should guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, as any child protection concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and may require further investigation by the appropriate authorities
- Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection issues on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared in this way must be held confidentially to themselves

4.7 Records and Monitoring

- Accurate records are essential to good child protection practice.
- Any one receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs of possible abuse must make an accurate record within 24 hours of reporting the incident using the orange pro forma , noting what was seen or said, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. This record must be signed and dated.
- Original file notes are kept for any pupil on child protection plan (CPP) or for any student monitored for child protection reasons
- These records are kept in a locked filing cabinet and electronically on a secure area of the school communications system
- If the student moves to a new education setting, safeguarding records are sent by registered post or hand delivered and are kept separate from the student's main file

4.8 Safer recruitment

Every effort will be made to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and all legislation regarding safer recruitment will be followed. This will include:

- following statutory DBS guidelines re checks on staff -requiring a standardised application form and not just a c.v.
- stating clearly on any advertisement or written information relating to employment our commitment to safeguarding children
- requiring those members of staff who have successfully completed the DCSF online training, to be on any interview panel used to recruit staff and to pose relevant questions
- validating as far as possible qualifications, experience and expertise
- proactively verifying references as far as possible (internal applicants will require references also using our standard pro forma)
- verifying identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address
- verifying the right to work in the UK
- examining all career breaks, sudden job changes and/or dismissals
- maintaining a single, central record of all staff
- The school will follow the recommendations re trainee teachers and contractors as set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2016)
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection

Where the school premises is made available to external bodies such as sports clubs or where service providers use the premises both during and outside school hours, we will ensure that they have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with these bodies or providers.

4.9 Children missing from education

A student missing from education for eight sessions or more is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Should a pupil go missing from school (education) the Attendance officer will inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer and contact the Educational Welfare service; the Designated Safeguarding Officer will consider further actions/support should it be required.

We will inform the LA of any pupil removed from our roll so that the LA can identify and safeguard children missing from education.

4.10 Students on the child protection register or for whom we have child protection concerns

The number of students on a child protection plan varies. There are also other students about whom we have child protection concerns who are not on a child protection plan.

We support students in various ways by:

- following the guidance set out in any child protection plans
- ensuring they know and are comfortable about whom they can approach for help or if they have specific concerns
- monitoring their welfare carefully, including talking to them regularly about their well being
- attending any child protection meetings held on their behalf, including speaking on their behalf at such meetings should they request it
- monitoring their attendance carefully and reporting any unexplained absence to social care
- monitoring their academic grades carefully to try to ensure they are making good progress in school
- enlisting the support of and liaising with other agencies as appropriate
- checking that they have access to all elements of school life, including visits and other activities
- informing their head of year that they are on a CP plan without breaching confidentiality so he/she knows to register immediately any concerns however minor with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

4.11 Looked After students

We have a Designated Lead and Governor responsible for Looked After students. We keep a list of students who are looked after by the local authority. In the light of the research that shows that these students fare less well at schools than their peers and to narrow this gap, we monitor their progress and wellbeing carefully by:

- being involved in and following the guidance set out in the pupil's personal education plan (PEP)
- arranging for our Designated Safeguarding Officer (or for another teacher to whom the child relates well) to take a particular interest in the pupil's welfare and to talk to them regularly offering in school support such as appropriate
- targeting pupil premium plus funding specifically to support children in care

- attending any liaison or review meetings held on their behalf, including speaking for them or acting as their advocate at such meetings should they request it, and keeping in touch with social workers and/or carers
- monitoring their attendance carefully and reporting any unexplained absence to social care and the Educational Welfare service
- monitoring their academic grades carefully to try to ensure they are making good progress in school
- informing their head of year that they are on the looked after register without breaching confidentiality so he/she knows to register any concerns speedily to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- being careful not to accept any under achievement just because the child is 'looked after'
- looking out for difficulties with homework or resources that may be a result of their being in care and giving them help to organise and manage their work and by providing the resources needed
- enlisting the support of and liaising with other agencies as appropriate
- checking that they have access to all elements of school life, including visits and other activities, and by giving these students the opportunities to take part in those self esteem projects/residential organised by the school as and when appropriate

4.12 Young Carers

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or a deputy) to keep a record of those students who play the part of a major carer for a family member. However, such families do not often publicise their situation for fear of social care involvement. We offer a support package to these students appropriate to their individual situation. This package would contain elements of the support offered to students looked after by the local authority.

4.13 Students with disabilities

Disabled children may be less able to recognise or understand that they are being abused. Communication difficulties may make it harder for them to disclose abuse and dependency on their care-giver may mean they have no-one to tell. Professionals may focus on meeting the needs of the child's impairment, however at The Bulmershe School we will always try to ensure that the voice of the child is sought and heard.

4.14 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE involves young people receiving something in exchange for sexual acts. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationships to serious gang and group exploitation. As a school staff we should be aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms and that students may not exhibit external signs of abuse. Therefore staff must be vigilant for the less obvious signs, lots of new electronic equipment, when before there was none, seeming to have extra money to spend, moving away from established friendship groups etc.

4.15 Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM involves cutting, and sometimes sewing the girl's genitalia, normally without anaesthetic, and can take place at any time from birth onwards. It is sometimes referred to as 'female circumcision' but this misnomer belies the invasive and irreversible nature of the procedure. It is now more correctly termed female genital mutilation.

The procedure has a cultural, rather than religious, origin and is practised by communities in many countries, including Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, Yemen and Iraq.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it a criminal offence, not only to carry out FGM in England, Scotland and Wales on a girl who is a UK national or permanent resident, but also to take a girl out of the UK to have FGM performed abroad, even to countries where FGM is still legal. Professionals have a mandatory duty to report such offences to the police.

The indicators of FGM may initially mirror those of sexual abuse. You may notice, for example, that a girl or young woman shows signs of pain or discomfort, needs to visit the toilet constantly, has vaginal blood loss or is unable to sit comfortably. She may make excuses to avoid PE and other physical activity or refuse to use the school showers. She may also become evasive or fearful if you enquire if she is unwell, and assure you that she is fine when she clearly is not.

Staff will be vigilant in monitoring any requests for holiday absence for girls to travel to high-risk countries

4.16 Forced marriage

The subject of forced marriage is also highlighted in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education. Forced marriage occurs when a young person is forced into a marriage that they do not want with someone they have not chosen, following coercion, intimidation, threats and possibly physical and sexual abuse. It is very different from an arranged marriage, where both young people can make the decision to accept or decline the partner chosen for them by their parents.

Once again, schools can be seen as being in the front line in protecting young people from this type of abuse. A student who fears that they are likely to be forced into a marriage may disclose to a member of staff. Staff will be vigilant in monitoring potential holiday arrangements of high-risk students.

Forced marriage, here or abroad, is a crime; we will always report to both Police and Children's Social Care.

4.17 Radicalisation/PREVENT

Appendix A included in this policy outlines the overall approach to PREVENT Safeguarding. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, which includes schools, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the PREVENT duty). The school's work on promoting life in Modern Britain via the curriculum underpins this strategy.

Possible Channel referrals will be discussed by the school Safeguarding Team if appropriate and in accordance with government guidelines.

Lettings are vetted and monitored by the school site manager, who is directly line managed by the Headteacher.

4.18e-Safety

We have policy guidance in place to ensure our ability to protect and educate our students and staff in their use of technology.

4.19 Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)

As a school, we believe that respect for ourselves and others is a fundamental right and responsibility of/for all. It is the duty of all staff to ensure that every member of the school community feels valued, irrespective of their sexual/gender orientation, race or religion. Diversity is celebrated and valued at The Bulmershe School.

Appendix A

PREVENT Safeguarding Objectives

Within this overall framework the Prevent strategy will specifically:

- respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support
- work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address

Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to **safeguard children** from drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

The purpose must be to protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values. Awareness of Prevent and the risks it is intended to address are both vital. Staff can help to identify, and to refer to the relevant agencies, children whose behaviour suggests that they are being drawn into terrorism or extremism. Schools of all kinds can play a role in enabling young people to explore issues like terrorism and the wider use of violence in a considered and informed way. Schools can facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government. These are important for reasons which go far beyond Prevent but they connect to the Prevent agenda.

PREVENT referrals should be reported in line with other safeguarding procedures using the orange pro forma.

APPENDIX B

Recognising signs of child abuse

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

Categories of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Signs of Abuse in Children:

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation

Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

- In an abusive relationship the child may:
- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities may face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, including:

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

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help" and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area

- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures. There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scape-goated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a "loner" – difficulty relating to others

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)
- Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:
- Pain or itching of genital area

- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

Sexual Abuse by Young People

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, sexting, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental sexual activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is "acting out" which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

Assessment

In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- **Equality** – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- **Consent** – agreement including all the following:
 - Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience;
 - Knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed;
 - Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives;
 - Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally;
 - Voluntary decision;
 - Mental competence.

Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide. Further advice is available from the Referral and Assessment Team.

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause. Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- underage sexual activity;
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour;
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex;
- repeat sexually transmitted infections;
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage;
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources;
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile;
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs);
- changes in the way they dress;
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends;
- seen at known places of concern;
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are;
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- contact with known perpetrators;
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations;
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers;
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation;
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations;
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether;
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual);
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress;
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders;
- drug or alcohol misuse;
- getting involved in crime;
- police involvement, police records;
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership;
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

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 will be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff will speak to the designated safeguarding lead..

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

FGM involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. There are four types of procedure:

- Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris
- Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
- Type 3 Infibulation - entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
- Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

FGM is it carried out in the belief that:

- it brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage;
- Preserves a girl's virginity;
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage;
- Upholds family honour;
- Cleanses and purifies the girl;
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community;
- Fulfils a religious requirement;
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition;
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic;
- Is cosmetically desirable;
- It makes childbirth easier (it doesn't).

Is FGM legal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is **illegal** in most countries including the UK.

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening are:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony;
- Family taking a long trip abroad;
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan);
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM;
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage.

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities;
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued;
- Bladder or menstrual problems;
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable;
- Complaining about pain between the legs;
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about;

- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group;
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity;
- Repeated urinal tract infection;
- Disclosure.

Domestic Abuse

How does it affect children?

Children can be traumatised by seeing and hearing violence and abuse. They may also be directly targeted by the abuser or take on a protective role and get caught in the middle. In the long term this can lead to mental health issues such as depression, self-harm and anxiety.

What are the signs to look out for?

Children affected by domestic abuse reflect their distress in a variety of ways. They may change their usual behaviour and become withdrawn, tired, start to wet the bed and have behavioural difficulties. They may not want to leave their house or may become reluctant to return. Others will excel, using their time in your care as a way to escape from their home life. None of these signs are exclusive to domestic abuse so when you are considering changes in behaviours and concerns about a child, think about whether domestic abuse may be a factor.

Allegations of abuse made against other children

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. There are different forms peer on peer abuse can take, but abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. There are different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could, for example, include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and if there are concerns regarding a child then contact:

- The Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding or one of the Deputy Designated Persons;
- **999 if you believe a child is in immediate danger;**
- Early Help Hub (Children's Safeguarding and Social Care Team) Telephone 0118 908 8002 or email: triage@wokingham.gcsx.gov.uk;
- Emergency Duty Team - out of office hours: telephone: 01344 786 543;
- Thames Valley Police: telephone: 101 non emergencies;
- NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) 24 Hour Helpline: 0808 800 5000

APPENDIX C

Safeguarding: Procedure for Referrals

