

# WEST PARK ACADEMY

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Mrs Jenna Ford - Deputy Principal

**Single Point of Contact for Prevent (SPOC):** Mrs Jenna Ford - Deputy Principal

**In case of absence of Mrs Ford:** Mrs Sam Hirst - Principal  
Miss Hayley Woodcock

**Link Trustee for Child Protection and Safeguarding:** Mr Maurice Jones

**Link Trustee for Filtering and Monitoring:** Mr Maurice Jones

**Link Trustee for Looked After Children:** Mrs Abigail Rowcroft

**Date of Board of Trustees Approval:** September 2023

**This policy must be reviewed annually**

**Date of next review:** September 2024

### **Referral to Darlington**

If you are a professional and have a concern regarding a child or young person, please contact the Children's Front Door on 01325 406252.

The Children's Front Door will ensure that the children and young people will get the service they require.

Children's Front Door is open

Monday –Thursday 8:30am - 5:00pm

Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team: 01642 524552

If you suspect a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm then phone the police on 999

### **Other External Agencies**

The LA Inclusion Officer: Diane Gage Tel: 01325 405670 Mob: 07392 286583

The LA Education Safeguarding Officer: Angela Turnbull Tel: 01325 405848 Mob: 07391 396050

For concerns about an adult at risk the Designated Lead/SPOC should inform Adult Social Care on 01325 406111

### **Darlington's Designated Officer – managing allegations against staff:**

**Marian Garland**

**Telephone: 01325 406451**

**Secure e-mail: [designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk)**

### **Prevent Key contacts**

For concerns about children the DSL/Prevent Champion should fill in a referral form. A response is expected within 5 days.

For concerns about any other adult you should contact the Police on 0191 3752905 or e-mail [HQspecialbranch@durham.pnn.police.uk](mailto:HQspecialbranch@durham.pnn.police.uk)

If a referral is then made to the Prevent team, and it is determined that there are concerns around radicalisation and violent extremism in relation to the referred individual, they can be supported through either Channel or Prevent Case Management processes.

This policy MUST be read in conjunction with other related Academy policies and documents.

- **ICT Acceptable Use Policy**
- **Anti Harassment and Bullying Policy**
- **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**
- **Positive Behaviour Policy**
- **Children Missing education (CME)**  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children\\_Missing\\_Education\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)
- **Children Missing from Home or Care**  
[http://www.darlington.gov.uk/media/811259/Children\\_Missing\\_from\\_home\\_or\\_care\\_procedures\\_May\\_2015.pdf](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/media/811259/Children_Missing_from_home_or_care_procedures_May_2015.pdf)
- **Child sexual exploitation – (CSE) Keeping Children Safe 2023 (Appendix A)**
- **Staff Code Of Conduct**
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Data Protection Policy**
- **Domestic Violence** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse>
- **Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Policy**
- **Exclusion Policy**
- **Fabricated or induced Illness**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced>
- **Faith Abuse** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>
- **Female genital mutilation (FGM) Keeping Children Safe in Education (Appendix A)**
- **Forced Marriage – Keeping Children Safe in Education (Appendix A)**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **SEND Policy and Information Report**
- **Intimate Care Policy**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
- **Children Looked After Policy**
- **Medication Policy**
- **Meeting digital and technological standards in schools and colleges**  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges>
- **Mental Health in Schools**  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/508847/Mental\\_Health\\_and\\_Behaviour\\_-\\_advice\\_for\\_Schools\\_160316.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508847/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_advice_for_Schools_160316.pdf)
- **Missing/Lost or Uncollected Child Policy**

- **Private fostering**  
<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/family-placement-service/private-fostering/>
- **Protecting Children from Extremism and Radicalisation Policy – see separate policy**
- **PSHE Policy**
- **Child on Child Abuse Policy and Procedures**
- **Safe recruitment policy – see Code of Conduct**
- **Schools Human Resources policies and procedures.**
- **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**
- **Single Equality Scheme**
- **Trafficking** <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-trafficking/>

## 1. Purpose of a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1.1. This is a whole Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy that provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues.

West Park Academy is committed to the development of good practice and sound procedures, to ensure that child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, timely, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.

We follow the procedures set out by Darlington Safeguarding Partnership and takes into account the statutory guidance issued by the **Department for Education (DFE); Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023**.

## 2. Introduction

2.1. West Park Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children. The health, safety and well-being of all our children is our primary concern.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

- a) **Prevention** (e.g. positive Academy atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils)
- b) **Protection** (by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns)
- c) **Support** (to pupils and Academy staff and to children who may have been abused).

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, Trustees and visitors to West Park Academy who have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect and peer on peer abuse in its many forms. Effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children, in line with: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. **Please see Appendix 2 for statutory duties.**

## 3. Academy commitment

3.1. We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. Our Academy will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- b) Ensure that pupils know that there are adults in the Academy who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities that equip pupils with skills they need to stay safe from abuse

- d) Include in the curriculum material, which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills
- e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.
- f) Ensure all staff are trained to carry out their safeguarding duties effectively through appropriate induction and regular training
- g) Ensure the academy Designated Safeguarding Lead works in collaboration with the ICT Lead and the ICT Support team (One ITSS) to ensure that filtering and monitoring systems are in place and reviewed regularly. Filtering systems are maintained and configured following advice from "Keeping Safe In Education 2023" and the "Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges" documentation.

## 4. Framework

4.1. Academies do not operate in isolation. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice is the responsibility of Darlington Safeguarding Children Board.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting ALL children from maltreatment and abuse; (including in addition to the four categories of harm (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect), issues such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), Honour based violence (HBV) inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage, preventing radicalisation and extremism, harassment, bullying and victimization) preventing impairment of children's health or development including deaf and disabled pupils; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child Protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs (physical and or psychological) likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

**Sexting** (also known as youth produced sexual imagery, nudes and semi-nudes), is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

5.2. Children can make disclosures or show signs of abuse at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools. Therefore, it is important that ALL staff:

- Read and understand Part 1 and Annex B of the DFE statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education and review this guidance at least annually signing a declaration to say that they have done so.
- Ensure that they are aware of our systems and procedures which support safeguarding
- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child
- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of **harm** to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately on CPOMs. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies. All discussions decisions and reasons for them should be recorded on CPOMs adhering to the Academy's recording and information sharing policy/ procedure
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child /an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies
- Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices of staff and potential failures in the Academy's safeguarding regime through whistleblowing procedures and the staff behaviour/code of conduct policy.
- Ensure that they attend regular formal training/updates at least annually to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child
- Understand that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out
- Understand through online safety training the additional risks for pupils online and continue to promote the Academy's Online E-Safety Policy in the protection of all pupils
- Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, April 2015, the Academy has 'Due regard' To Prevent' and to assess risk of children and young people being radicalised drawn into extremism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols in place for all visitors so that views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others). Please see **Protecting Children from Extremism and Radicalisation Policy**.

West Park Academy staff will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.



**Please see APPENDIX 1 for information on roles and responsibilities within school**

**5.3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Mrs J Ford)** has overall responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection and has the appropriate authority and training to undertake such a role and is able to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. This person is able to take part in strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and to support other trained staff to do so as well as contribute to the assessment of children.

It is the role of the senior designated person to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the Academy may put in place to protect them
- Understand and keep up with any developments to their role
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the Academy's Child Protection Policy and procedures, the Behaviour Policy and the safeguarding response to children missing in education, especially new and part time staff
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure, written records of concerns and referrals
- Understand and support their school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Be aware of all school excursions and residentials and clarify with educational visit co-ordinator/group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding/child protection
- Ensure a whole school policy about managing behaviour and discipline including the use of reasonable force, is in place
- Ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber-bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, is in place. Inform LA of any pupil to be deleted from school admission register and follow missing from Education protocols
- Inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

5.4. It is the role and responsibility of the Trustees to ensure that the Academy has an effective policy, that child protection procedures are complied with, and to support the Academy in this aspect. They must appoint a link Trustee to monitor the effectiveness of the policy. It is important that Trustees are not given details relating to specific child protection situation to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

5.5. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Development and Designated Officer provides advice, support and training to the Academy and to the senior designated person for child protection.

## **6. Procedures- All staff and volunteers must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding concern:**

6.1. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy DSL) will be informed immediately by an employee of the Academy, pupil, parent or other persons, in the following circumstances:

- Suspicion that a child is being harmed
- There is evidence that a child is being harmed

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen carefully, remain calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing.
- Allow them to talk freely and do not ask any leading questions.
- Do not promise that you will keep not tell anyone and that you will need to pass this information on to the right person.
- Record the disclosure immediately after on CPOMs in the child's own words.
- Report the incident to the DSL or Deputies
- Do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved.

6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to The CIAT if necessary.

6.3 Contact should cover these basic facts:

- Children and family member details
- Significant others
- Other services involved
- Details of person making referral
- Consent
- Presenting Issues

- Reason for referral/request for services - outline concerns and why you believe this child is at risk of significant harm or in need of additional services (including impact on the child)
- What support is currently in place
- Named lead identified and ownership of the contact made

On receipt of a contact form to Children's Social Care, the CIAT has 24 hours in which to make a decision about any actions to be taken in respect of the identified child. The DSL (Deputy Principal) or Deputy DSLs (Principal/EYFS Lead) will be kept informed at all times.

6.3 All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children must be taken seriously. Allegations against any person, who works with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances.

6.4 All allegations need to be referred to the Designated Officer (DO) within 24 hours where it is alleged that a person working with children has:

1. Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
2. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
3. Behaved towards a child/ren in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children

6.5 It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children, including those who work in a voluntary capacity, are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way which provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

6.6 All referrals should be reported and discussed with the Designated Officer, within 24 hours and followed up on the Managing Allegations referral form - see [Allegations Management Referral/Strategy form](#). The form MUST be completed and sent to the DO as soon as possible following the incident occurring- see below

6.7 If you are not sure whether a particular matter warrants a referral, make contact with the Designated Officer within 24 hours and she will be able to advise you on the correct action to take.

**Darlington Borough Council Designated Officer:**

**Marian Garland**

**Telephone: 01325 406451**

**Secure e-mail: [designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk)**

**6.8 Allegations made against other pupils** (Child-on Child Abuse). We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be passed off as “banter” or “just part of growing up”.

Most cases of pupils hurting each other will be dealt with under the Academy's Positive Behaviour Policy, but this policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils at risk
- Is violent
- Involves drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or harassment, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures/videos including sexting

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- The member of staff must record the allegation on CPOMS and inform the DSL
- The DSL will contact the Local Authority Social Care Team and follow their advice
- Inform the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan in place

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that might affect different genders- including inappropriate touching
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour, positive relationships and consent
- Ensure that pupils know that they can talk to staff confidentially
- Ensure that staff are trained and understand that pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves.

## 6.9 Sexting

### What is 'sexting'?

In the latest advice for schools and colleges (UKCCIS, 2016), sexting is defined as **the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18**. It includes nude or semi-nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

'Sexting' does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under-18 year olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.

- Any concerns about or incidents involving sexting should be immediately reported to the DSL
- Staff must not view, copy, print or save the image themselves. If the image is viewed accidentally this should be reported to the DSL
- Staff must not delete the image or ask the pupil to do so
- Staff must not ask the pupil involved to disclose information regarding the image (this is the responsibility of the DSL)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, pupils it involves or their parents/carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame the young people involved
- **All** such incidents should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in line with the Academy's safeguarding policies.

### For further information

Download the full guidance Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People (UKCCIS, 2016) at [www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis).

## 7. Training and Support

7.1. Our Academy will ensure that all senior designated persons attend training relevant to their role in line with advice from the LSCB.

- All staff and Trustees will undertake awareness raising training under their induction into the Academy in Child Protection and Conduct. Yearly updates will be provided for all staff and DSL's via training, staff meetings, briefings, emails, bulletins and an evidence record maintained to indicate when staff and Trustees have been trained. **(See Safeguarding File)**
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and her deputies will receive appropriate training updated every **two** years. They will undertake prevent awareness raising and in addition to the formal training their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals but at least annually.
- Support will be available for staff from the designated leads in the first instance, and from other members of the Academy's management team where there concerns or queries about child protection.
- All staff – including supply staff and volunteers – in the academy will **read at least part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education, this policy, the Code of Conduct policy and the Positive Behaviour Policy** and a record signed to indicate that this has been done.

## **8. Professional confidentiality**

8.1. Confidentiality is an issue, which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the senior designated person and may require further investigations by appropriate authorities. Promising confidentiality would lead to a breakdown in trust of adults by the pupil and could potentially compromise their wellbeing and safety.

8.2 The senior designated person will invoke the local agreed guidelines and procedures, where there is a cause for concern.

8.3 Staff will be informed of relevant aspects in respect of child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

8.4 Systems are in place for pupils to confidentially report abuse to an adult in school

## **9. Records and monitoring**

9.1. Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our Academy is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our Academy, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

9.2 An incident log will be made of the 'cause for concern' via our online system CPOMS and shared with the DSL/Deputy DSL's and action taken will be logged. Information and reports may be uploaded but photographic evidence will not be made. These records are kept confidentially and only registered key holders may access this information. Records must also be kept of any pupil who is being monitored for child protection reasons. This will be monitored using the Early Help Assessment Framework.

9.3 If a pupil transfers from the Academy their file will be forwarded to the pupil's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's named child protection person.

## **10. Availability**

10.1. During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

10.2 The designated safeguarding lead and school should arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities

## **11. Attendance at Child Protection Conferences**

11.1. The senior designated person or other relevant staff (class teacher) will aim to attend child protection conferences when called in respect of a pupil. A report should also be completed for conference; the report should indicate any concerns that the Academy may have, the pupil's attendance, attainment and contact that might have been made with parents/carers or professionals.

## **12. Supporting pupils at risk**

12.1 Our Academy recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. This Academy may be the only secure, stable and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at Academy, their behaviour may still be challenging.

12.2. This Academy will endeavour to support pupils through:

- a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation which includes teaching children about safeguarding and e-safety
- b) The Academy ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- c) A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the Academy setting
- d) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families
- e) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so
- f) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

12.3. This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in Academy.

## **13. Safe Academy, Safe Staff**

13.1. Staff working in a one-to-one situation with a pupil should ensure that they are positioned so as to be visible and audible to other staff where there may be a possibility of misinterpretation of their interaction with a pupil. All staff should ensure the privacy and dignity of all pupils, especially during the routines of personal care of our pupils.

13.2. Academy staff work hard to maintain effective partnerships with parents and carers, and they should be aware that this policy might affect this working relationship at a given time. However, we will maintain our commitment to working with parents and carers to the benefit of all pupils. Sensitive and supportive handling of these issues, whilst affirming that the pupils in our care are our first priority, will help maintain this working relationship.

13.3. All staff (including Trustees) are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, prior to taking up appointment, and to sign a declaration regarding convictions relating to the harm of children during their application process. Staff who deliberately seek to mislead the Academy in respect of this will be subject to dismissal.



## **14. Abuse of Position of Trust - Sexual Offences Act 2003**

14.1 Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident.

14.2 In addition, staff should understand that it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual.

14.3 This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

Sexual Offences Act 2003

## **15. Communication with children (including the use of technology)**

15.1 Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policy which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

15.2 Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand held devices. (Given the ever changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)

This means adults should:

- not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work
- not give out their personal details
- use only equipment and Internet services provided by the school or setting
- follow the Acceptable Use policy
- ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute

## **16. Worried About an Adult?**

16.1 You may want to tell someone that something is happening to you.

16.2 You may be concerned about someone, whether you are a relative, a neighbour or a member of the public. Someone may tell you something that has happened to him or her or you may see or hear something happening, that makes you feel uneasy or uncomfortable.

16.3 The priority is to keep people safe from harm. It can be difficult to identify the seriousness of a concern when the abuse is first recognised but where there is any concern at all, this should be reported.

16.4 There are several ways you can report abuse. These include: **Completing the Safeguarding Adults Concern Form with accompanying Guidance Notes** and emailing to: [ssact@darlington.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ssact@darlington.gcsx.gov.uk). **Contact the First Point of Contact Team (Adult Social Care at Darlington Borough Council)**. You can explain that you wish to report a suspected case of adult abuse.

**Telephone** - 01325 406111

**Minicom** - 01325 468504

**Text** - 07538 601527

16.5 If you require help urgently outside office hours, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team from 5pm on Friday to 9am on Monday and also on Bank holidays.

Telephone - **01642 524552** or Minicom: **01642 602346**.

16.6 For any safeguarding concern, it is important that the views and wishes of the adult being abused are considered, it is also important, if someone is in danger, that we ensure they are safe. It is important to talk about the concern and find out the best way to keep the person at risk or others safe.

## **17. Early Help and use of the Early Help Assessment Plan**

17.1 The Academy believes that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. This means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Children and families may require support from a range of local agencies. When a child/family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency eg education, housing, health, etc the Academy uses the early help assessment process to complete an early help assessment and identify what help the child and family require to prevent their needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children's Act 1989.

17.2 The Academy will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for any child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- is in a family where circumstances present challenges for the child, such as adult substance abuse, adult mental ill health, domestic abuse
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- is particularly vulnerable in any of the ways identified above
- school refusal and attendance

17.3 The Home School Family Co-ordinator is responsible for providing early help. An Early Help Assessment will only be undertaken with the agreement of the child's parents/carers. If the family consent is not received and concerns remain the Academy may make a referral to Children's Access Point. Our Early Help Co-ordinator is Louise Conroy.

## 18. Attendance

17.1 Full attendance is paramount to the wellbeing of all of our pupils and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Attendance is monitored closely by the Home School Family Support Worker and we work closely with the Family Support Team when the patterns of absence are of concern. Our Attendance/Registration Policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually.

### **Legislation and Guidance**

**This policy has been informed by the by the following legislation and national & local guidance:**

Education Act 2002 Section 175

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175)

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made>

Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/728/made>

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Children Act 1989/2004

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Working together to safeguard children DOH (2015)

[www.doh.gov.uk](http://www.doh.gov.uk)

Darlington Safeguarding Children Board Procedures

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk>

CP Referral Form

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/local-safeguarding-children-board/professionals-and-volunteers/policy,-procedures-and-guidance/>

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Data Protection Act 1998

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>

Sexual Offences Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Freedom of Information Act 2000

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga\\_20000036\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga_20000036_en.pdf)

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/counter-terrorism-and-security-bill>

Prevent Duty guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Serious Crime Act 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/contents/enacted>

Mandatory reporting of FGM – New Duty 31<sup>st</sup> October 15

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

Behaviour and Discipline in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools-guidance-for-governing-bodies>

**See Appendix 3 for further information on the following**

- **Children Missing from Education**
- **‘Honour Based’ violence**
- **Female Genital Mutilation**
- **Forced Marriage**
- **Breast Ironing**
- **Child Sexual Exploitation**
- **Criminal Child Exploitation**
- **Child on Child abuse**
- **Sexting**
- **Self-harm and Eating Disorders**

## **Appendix 1**

<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):</b>	Mrs Jenna Ford - Deputy Principal
<b>Single Point of Contact for Prevent (SPOC):</b>	Mrs Jenna Ford - Deputy Principal
<b>In case of absence of DSL:</b>	Mrs Sam Hirst - Principal Miss Hayley Woodcock
<b>Link Trustee for Child Protection and Safeguarding:</b>	Mr Maurice Jones
<b>Link Trustee for Filtering and Monitoring:</b>	Mr Maurice Jones
<b>Link Trustee for Children Looked After:</b>	Mrs Abigail Rowcroft
<b>Designated Officer at the Local Authority:</b>	Mrs Marian Garland

## Appendix 2

### Statutory duties that apply to schools and academies

#### Working Together To Safeguard Children 2018 & Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Schools should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- ensuring that the school or college contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans
- a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- a senior member of staff to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements
- a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings and ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback
- ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children
- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- a designated professional lead for safeguarding. Their role is to support other members of staff, to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated leads roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. They should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019) including policies on when to obtain a relevant Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) check
- supervised volunteers who attend for 4 or more sessions in 30 days **MUST** have an Enhanced DBS check
- appropriate supervision and support for staff. All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated
- employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role

- staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare. Staff in schools and colleges should ensure that all staff read at least part one of **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**
- ensure there is an effective child protection policy in place together with a staff behaviour policy (code of conduct). Both should be provided to all staff – including temporary staff and volunteers – on induction;
- all professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- all schools and colleges have to be compliant with the requirements of the LSCB
- clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

In addition:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. The LADO should provide advice and guidance to schools, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process;
- any allegation should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the school. The LADO should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police; and
- if an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

In addition to these section 11 duties, which apply to schools, further safeguarding duties are also placed on them through other statutes. The key duties that fall on schools are set out below.

**Schools and colleges**

*Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities (in relation to their education functions and governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions, which include sixth-form colleges) to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age attending further education institutions. The same duty applies to independent schools (which include Academies and free schools) by virtue of regulations made under section 157 of the same Act.*

*In order to fulfil their duty under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, all educational settings to whom the duty applies should have in place the arrangements as set out above. In addition schools should have regard to specific guidance given by the Secretary of State under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 namely, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education and Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff.*



## **Appendix 3 - Current Safeguarding Issues - Definitions, signs and indicators**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:-

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- And taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

### **Child Protection**

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

Types of Child Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse
- Neglect and Non-Organic Failure to Thrive

### **Child Physical Abuse**

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

Indicators include:

- Fractures and bruises in non-walking children
- Recurrent unexplained injuries or burns
- Pinch bruises or bite bruises
- Bruises around the ears and mouth, black eyes (particularly both)
- Explanation inconsistent injury
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness
- Administration of excessive punishment
- Running Away
- Aggression
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted
- Arms and legs covered in hot weather
- Withdrawal from PE, swimming etc. (refusal to change)
- Fear of medical help/examination
- Frozen watchfulness
- Aggressive bullying behaviour

Common sites for accidental injury;

- Forehead, Nose, Chin
- Elbows, Forearm, Bony spine
- Knees, Shins

Common sites for non-accidental injury;

- Skull: fracture, bruising or bleeding under skull (from shaking)
- Eyes: bruising (particularly both eyes)
- Ears: pinch or slap marks, bruising
- Cheeks: bruising, finger marks
- Mouth: torn, split, swollen
- Neck: bruising, grasp marks
- Shoulders: bruising, grasp marks
- Chest: bruising, grasp marks
- Upper and inner arms: bruising, grasp marks
- Genitals: bruising
- Back, buttocks, thighs: outline of belt/buckles/scalds/burns
- Knees: grasp marks

Bruises are likely to be:

- Frequent
- Patterned (e.g. finger and thumb mark, outline of implement etc.)
- Old and new in same place (note colour)
- In unusual places (see above)

Burns and scalds are likely to have:

- A clear outline
- Unusual position (e.g. back of hand)
- Indicative shapes (e.g. cigarette burns, bar of electric fire, lighter etc.)

Suspicious injuries include:

- Bite marks
- Fingernail marks
- Large and deep scratches
- Incisions (eg from razor blades)

### **Child Sexual Abuse**

Definition: Sexual abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Safeguarding Policy

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of dependant, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or violate the social taboos of family roles.

**Indicators include:**

- Overly compliant behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Hints about sexual activity
- Pseudomature behaviour
- Persistent, inappropriate sexual play with peers, toys or themselves
- Excessive masturbation
- Sexually aggressive behaviour
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Detailed and inappropriate understanding of sexual behaviour
- Arriving early for school, leaving late, few if any absences
- Poor peer relationships, inability to make friends
- Lack of trust, particularly with significant others
- Inability to concentrate
- Sudden drop in school performance
- Extraordinary fear of males
- Seductive behaviour with males
- Running away from home
- Regressive, withdrawn behaviour
- Clinical depression, suicidal feelings
- Vaginal discharge and bleeding
- Soreness/injury of the genital/anal areas
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Venereal infection
- Pregnancy

**Child Emotional/Psychological Abuse**

Definition: The severe adverse effects upon behaviour and emotional development caused by persistent coldness, hostility or rejection or severe over-protection towards a child on the part of the parent or carer. Safeguarding Policy

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Three types of abuse come under this category:

1. Emotional Neglect: Acts of omission
2. Emotional Assault: The result of persistent verbal attacks by parents or siblings
3. Emotional Abuse: A chronic behaviour pattern that results in the child having a damaged self-image.

Indicators include:

- Speech delay, lack of communication skills
- Low self-esteem
- Learning difficulties, lack of concentration
- Withdrawal, isolation, depression
- Opposition, defiance
- Very passive behaviour
- Self-mutilation
- Compulsive behaviour, rituals and activities
- Pseudomature behaviour
- Running away
- Alcohol, drug, solvent abuse
- Stress symptoms eg bed wetting, soiling, stomach ache (without physical cause)
- Fear of situations
- Eating disorders (over eating, under eating)
- Inappropriate emotional responses
- Obsessive behaviour, rocking, thumb sucking
- Attention seeking

### **Child Neglect and Non-Organic Failure to Thrive**

**Definition:** Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, (for example by exposure to any kind of danger including cold and starvation), which results in serious impairment of the child's health and development.

Failure to thrive is a condition where a child shows medical evidence of a lack of normal physical and/or mental growth and development which has progressed over a period of time. It must be a medically diagnosed as non-organic.

**Indicators include:**

- Inappropriate clothing (too large/small, summer wear in winter etc)
- Running away
- Constant hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Frequent lateness
- Frequent non-attendance
- Low-self esteem
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging
- Poor personal hygiene

**Extra-familial harm (contextual safeguarding)**

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

**Children missing from education**

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Safeguarding Policy
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

### **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

### **Grooming**

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know – for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomer may be female or male. They can be any age

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed; or that what has happened is abuse. Safeguarding Policy

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

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

Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

This is part of our wider safeguarding duty. We will intervene where possible to prevent vulnerable children being radicalised. The internet has become a major factor in radicalisation and recruitment.

As with all other forms of abuse, staff should be confident in identifying pupils at risk and act proportionately.

We will work with other partners including the Channel Panel.

The DSL is appropriately trained and be able to offer advice, support and information to other staff.

We will ensure safe internet filters are in place and ensure our pupils are educated in online safety.

### **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (\*Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)

### **'Honour Based Violence' (HBV)**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) 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.

### **Female Genital Mutilation FGM**

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

School staff, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. Safeguarding Policy

What staff should do if they are worried about a child

- If a member of staff suspects a child is at risk of, has already undergone, or receives a disclosure about FGM, they must be careful to respond in an appropriate and sensitive manner. Efforts should be made to establish the full facts from the child before any action is taken.
- The member of staff should discuss it with the school's designated safeguarding lead, following the procedures set out in the settings child protection. The staff member must report the matter to the Police and Social Care with support of the designated safeguarding lead.
- School staff should not attempt to investigate the case themselves or attempt to speak to the child's parents as this may place the child at an increased risk of harm.



Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent **for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication**

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk)
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

### **Breast Ironing**

- Traditional West African Practice involves the pounding of the developing breasts of young girls with hot objects, most commonly stones, spoons and hammers.
- This practice is carried out by girl's mothers or female family members.
- The practice is carried out to remove outward signs of puberty and prevent girls becoming sexually attractive to men.
- Safeguarding SEN or Disabled Children
- SEN/Disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect and to be protected from harm.
- SEN/Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater risks and 'created vulnerability' as a result of negative attitudes and unequal access to services and resources and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairment.
- Safeguarding Policy

### **'Sexting' or 'youth produced imagery' in schools:**

Definition: 'Youth produced sexual imagery' refers to young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves. The types of incidents which this advice covers are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to the school's attention:

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

### **County Lines**

Definition: County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose

If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation. Like other forms of abuse, child criminal exploitation, including county lines: Further information on the signs of a young person's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

### **'Upskirting'**

Definition: 'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence

### **Serious violence**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in

performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is called

Operation Encompass. The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

### **Self-harm and Eating Disorders**

If a member of staff has any concerns about a child who they suspect is self-harming or suffering from an eating disorder they need to report their concerns to the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Link for guidance on signs and indicators of abuse**

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

Continuum of Need document;

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/local-safeguarding-children-board/professionals-and-volunteers/>

Links to specific safeguarding issues

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/local-safeguarding-children-board/professionals-and-volunteers/policy,-procedures-and-guidance/>

Child missing from education (CME)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/395138/Children\\_missing\\_education\\_Statutory\\_guidance\\_for\\_local\\_authorities.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf)

**West Park Academy, part of Shared Vision Learning Trust** an exempt charity limited by guarantee in England and Wales (Registered no: 7659444) whose registered office is at Alderman Leach Drive, Darlington, Co Durham DL2 2GF

Child missing from home or care

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/271820/Flowchart\\_when\\_a\\_child\\_goes\\_missing\\_from\\_care.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271820/Flowchart_when_a_child_goes_missing_from_care.pdf)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see also Appendix 1 of the Safeguarding Children procedure <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-you-suspect-a-child-is-being-sexually-exploited>

Bullying including cyberbullying

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Domestic violence

<https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

Drugs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

Fabricated or induced illness

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced>

Faith abuse

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

Female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also Appendix 1 of the Safeguarding Children procedure

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-multi-agency-practice-guidelines>

Forced marriage

<https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage>

Gangs and youth violence

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/226293/Advice\\_to\\_Schools\\_and\\_Colleges\\_on\\_Gangs.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226293/Advice_to_Schools_and_Colleges_on_Gangs.pdf) Safeguarding Policy

Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)

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

Mental health

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-mental-health-strategy-for-england>

Private fostering

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering>

Radicalisation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Sexting

<http://ceop.police.uk/>

Teenage relationship abuse

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/this-is-abuse-campaign>

Trafficking

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance>