



Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help Policy

September 2021

Douglas Valley Nursery School

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If you have concerns about a child who lives in **Wigan** contact:

Monday to Sunday 24 hours: 01942 828300

[Or you can make a referral electronically.](#)

Remember in an emergency please ring **999**

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Key Contacts

Table of identified persons with specific lead responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and other key agencies.

Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Head Teacher	Catherine Ardern	01942 705301	headteacher@admin.douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Catherine Ardern	01942 705301	headteacher@admin.douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Carolyn Penzak Tracey Hope	01942 705301	c.penzak@douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk t.hope@douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk
Nominated Governor/ trustee	Andrea Chambers	Through school 01942 705301	enquiries@admin.douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk
Chair of Governors/ Trustees	Jo Sullivan	Through school 01942 705301	enquiries@admin.douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk
Designated Teacher for Children Looked After	Catherine Ardern	01942 705301	headteacher@admin.douglasvalley.wigan.sch.uk

Table of key agencies contact details. They have safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles which are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

Designated officer (Allegations) (formally known as LADO)	Sue Wharton	01942 486042	lado@wigan.gov.uk
Single Point of contact / Children's Social Care Case referrals	Duty team	01942 828300	https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Health-Social-Care/Children-and-young-people/ProfessionalReferralForm.aspx

Early Help Hub	StartWell	01942 828300	EHH@wigan.gov.uk
Wigan Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP)		01942 486025	wscbtraining@wigan.gov.uk
Link Social Worker	N/A		
CAMHS Link Worker	N/A		
School Nursing/ Health Visiting Service	Longshoot Health Centre	01942 244414	
Service Delivery Footprint (SDF) Huddle Manager	Stephen Gerrard	07825 061274	stephen.gerrard1@wigan.gov.uk
Housing		01942 404364	www.wigan.gov.uk

If you believe that a child or young person is at **immediate risk** of harm or injury, then contact the **Police on 999**

Definitions

Safeguarding is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; 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 refers to the situation where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, and action is required to protect that child.

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by

- [The Children Act 1989 \(as amended\).](#)
- [The Children and Social Work Act 2017.](#)
- [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.](#)

In addition to the revised documents;

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020](#) (KCSiE)

Other key documents are noted, which have prompted changes to safeguarding requirements over time. This policy references these throughout where relevant:

- [GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.](#)
- [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners 2018.](#)
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges \(guidance document\) 2021.](#)
- [Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018.](#)
- [Childcare Act 2006 \(as amended in 2018\).](#)

This policy should also be read in conjunction with [Wigan's Threshold of Need Document and Procedure](#) and [Wigan's Resolution Policy](#) .This policy should be read in alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our pupils;

- Self Regulation (Behaviour) policy
- Equality Statement
- PSED statement (including Relationships and Sex education)
- First Aid & Accident policy
- Staff Code of Conduct (for safer working practice)
- Whistleblowing policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Illness and Administration of Medication policy
- SEND policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Security and Access policy
- Allegations against staff
- Compliments and complaints policy
- E - Safety, including staff use of mobile phones
- Risk Assessment
- Intimate Care
- Resolution
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy
- Policy on Supporting Children in Care
- Attendance including the safeguarding response to children who go missing

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- All of our pupils' / students are safe and protected from harm
- Safeguarding procedures are in place to help pupils and students to feel safe and learn to stay safe
- Adults in the education setting community are aware of the expected behaviours and the legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- All agencies are providing appropriate support to children and young people through adoption of the early help framework

This will be achieved by:

- Supporting the child's / young person's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- Providing a high quality, safe and stimulating environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, feel confident, and are able to enjoy, learn and grow in confidence. Have positive relationships with the adults caring for them and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- Raising the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and young people, of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse (See Appendix 1 and 2) and preventing and intervening earlier to address support and social needs of young people through the early help framework
- Providing a systematic means of monitoring children / young people known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, Douglas Valley Nursery School, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those pupils/students.
- Emphasising the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- Developing a structured procedure within the education setting which will be followed by all members of the education setting community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Also, that staff have had access to specific training and awareness raising concerning:
 - Staff Code of Conduct (for safer working practice)
 - D/DSL training
 - KCSiE (2021) Part 1 and Annex A
 - Children Looked After (CLA)
 - Online safety training for staff
 - Preventing Radicalisation
 - Staff training
 - Whistleblowing
- Developing and promoting effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Health and Social Care.
- Ensuring that all staff working within our education setting who have substantial access to children and young people have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check and a central record is kept for audit. The Guidance regarding DBS checks was updated by the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#) and further information can be found regarding [what level of check is required for individuals which has been produced by the UK government](#).
- Curriculum – teaching about safeguarding: Our pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life. We provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes, and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. The PSHE and citizenship curriculum specifically includes the following objectives:
 - Developing pupil confidence and self-esteem
 - Developing pupil's communication skills
 - Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety

- Developing respectful relationships and a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships and consent)
- Developing pupil's understanding of being safe

Scope

As outlined above, the term 'safeguarding children' covers a range of measures including child protection procedures. It encompasses a preventative approach through the early help framework to keeping children safe that incorporates pupil health and safety; school behaviour and preventing bullying; supporting pupils with medical conditions; personal, health, social economic education; providing first aid and site security.

All staff are aware of the categories of abuse, which are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

The definitions of which and signs and symptoms of the four categories of abuse can be found in Appendix one and two.

This policy assumes that any of the categories of abuse could be disclosed within the Borough of Wigan, and gives further information relating to individual types of abuse within this document in line with advice and guidance within KCSiE (2021).

Expectations

All staff are:

- Familiar with this safeguarding policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- Alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse.
- Able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy.
- Able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a pupil.
- Involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans as required.

In addition, all staff have read and understood Part 1 of the latest version of KCSiE (2021) and all staff working directly with children have also read Annex A.

We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils / students from harm, and that the child's / young person's welfare is our paramount concern.

All staff believe that our education setting should provide a caring, positive, safe, and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, and moral development of the individual child or young person.

¹ Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc, and governors

We recognise that a child / young person who is neglected, abused, or witnessed violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of worth. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

We recognise that the education setting may provide the only stability in the lives of children and young people who have been abused or are at risk of harm. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

We recognise that the early help framework provides opportunities to intervene early and prevent safeguarding issues developing, as well providing a framework for appropriate support to be wrapped around the child / young person and their family.

Safe Setting/ Safe Staff

Our health and safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children and young people both physically within the education setting environment and, for example, in relation to internet use, and when away from the education setting, undertaking off site trips and visits.

School security guidance has been compiled to support the senior management of educational settings in the discharge of their responsibilities by ensuring the development and implementation of suitable procedures. You can request a copy of the 'School Security Guidance' which has been produced by Wigan Council by emailing wscbtraining@wigan.gov.uk

Douglas Valley Nursery School will ensure:

1. The Governing body / trustees takes seriously its responsibility [under section 175 of the Education Act 2002](#) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering / at risk of suffering abuse and neglect.

As key strategic decision makers and vision setters for the school, the governors will make sure that our policies and procedures are in line with national and local safeguarding requirements. Governors will work with the senior leaders to make sure the key actions set out in Safe Setting Safe Staff are in place.

- There is a safeguarding, child protection and early help policy together with a staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy

- The education setting operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training.²
- The education setting has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and to make a referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have, had they not resigned.
- All other settings - Disqualification by Association is no longer allowed within school settings, although Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, still applies to staff themselves.³
- A senior leader has Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsibility
- On appointment, the DSL undertakes interagency training and also undertakes DSL “new to role” training and an “update” course every 2 years
- All other staff have access to safeguarding training as appropriate
- Any weaknesses in Child Protection processes and procedures are remedied immediately.
- A member of the governing body / trustees, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the LA on safeguarding issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher / Head of School
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures are reviewed annually and that the Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help (Thresholds of Needs) policy is available on the education settings website or by other means
- The Governing body / Trustees consider how children may be taught about safeguarding. This may be part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal social health and economic education (PSHE) and / or for maintained schools through relationship and sex education (RSE).
- Other specific topics will include:
 - Online Safety
 - Respectful relationships
- That enhanced DBS checks are in place for Chairs of Governors / Trustees of independent, academies, non-maintained special schools.
- The Nominated Governor (NG) for safeguarding liaises with the headteacher / principal and the D/DSL to complete an annual Section 175 safeguarding audit to return to the local authority.

² Safer recruitment training can be accessed through Wigan Safeguarding Children’s Board

³ Disqualification by Association now only applies in domestic settings, not schools. Disqualification under the Child Care Act still applies to staff themselves who work in a child care capacity, whether paid, volunteer or are on work placements. Relevant staff are those working in child care, or in a management role because they are: working with reception age children at any time; or working with children older than reception until age eight, outside school hours. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2018) paragraph 116 also refers to disqualification: “For staff who work in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision, the school needs to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009”.

2. KCSiE (2021) is statutory guidance that education settings in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children applying to.
 - Governing bodies of maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools) and colleges.
 - Proprietors of independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) and non-maintained special schools. In the case of academies, free schools and alternative provision academies, the proprietor will be the academy trust; and Management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs)
3. The lead DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership team who has; along with the deputy designated safeguarding lead(s), undertaken the relevant training, and, upon appointment will undertake DSL new to role training followed by biannual updates.
 - The DSL's who are involved in recruitment and at least one member of the governing body / trustees will also complete safer recruitment training to be renewed every 3 years (if it is felt that a refresher is required.)
 - The name of the designated members of staff for child protection (DSL's and DDSL's) will be clearly visible in the school, with a statement explaining the education settings role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
4. All staff are to have the appropriate level of training relevant to their role:
 - All members of staff are trained in, and receive, regular updates in e-safety and reporting concerns
 - All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding statement and safeguarding, child protection and early help (thresholds of need) policy, with the DSL's names clearly displayed, as part of their induction.
 - All other staff, volunteers, and governors / trustees, have child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
5. Child protection and safeguarding concerns or allegations against adults working in the school are referred to the DO (previously LADO) ⁴ for advice and that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children or young people will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal, or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer.
6. All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to safeguarding and child protection procedures through publication of the education settings Safeguarding, Child protection and Early Help policy, and reference to it in the school or setting's parents information.

⁴ DO – Designated Officer (previously LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer) for allegations against staff. DO threshold document can be found here <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/WSCB/LADO-threshold.pdf>

7. The Policy is available publicly either on the education settings website or by other means. Parents / Carer's are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy of it via the website / newsletter.
8. All visitors complete a sign in / out form, wear a school ID badge and are provided with safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel.
9. Visitors of a professional role are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at the education setting. Supporting letter in relation to DBS checks of visitors holding professional ID badges can be found in the guidance provided by Wigan Council and Bridgewater Community Health Care.
[Bridgewater DBS Letter .pdf](#)
[Wigan Council HR letter regarding DBS Checks .pdf](#)
10. Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
11. Our lettings policy, for community use of the premises, will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.
12. Our procedures will be annually (as a minimum) reviewed and updated.

Training

All members of staff and volunteers have read, signed and understood the school's Staff Code of Conduct.

Induction

The welfare of all our pupils is of paramount importance. All staff including volunteers are informed of our safeguarding procedures including online safety, at induction. Our induction also includes:

- Plan of support for individuals appropriate to the role for which they have been hired
- Confirmation of the conduct expected of staff within the school – our Staff Code of Conduct
- Opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities
- Confirmation of the line management / mentor process whereby any general concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability will be addressed.

Safeguarding training

This training is for all staff and is updated every 3 years as a minimum to ensure staff understand their role in safeguarding. Any member of staff does not attend the whole school session will be expected to complete this statutory training requirement on their return to school. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as necessary and at least annually. All staff also receives training in respect of online safety, and this is updated, as necessary.

Advanced training

The D/DSL has additional training which is updated every two years as a minimum. The D/DSL also attends multi-agency courses relevant to school needs. Their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually e.g. via e-bulletins or safeguarding networking events with other D/DSLs.

Safer Recruitment

At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

Preventing Radicalisation

All staff undertakes Prevent training.

Staff support

Due to the demanding, often distressing nature of child protection work, we support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through the challenges of this aspect of their role with a senior leader and to seek further support as appropriate.

Governors

Governors undertake the school's Induction programme. They may choose to complete face to face training for governors provided by Wigan Council. In addition, governors may choose to attend whole school safeguarding and child protection training.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior member of staff, who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school. Details of our DSL and Deputy DSL are available on the Douglas Valley Nursery School website, our newsletters, or the notice board in Reception.

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding child protection remains with the DSL.

The broad areas of responsibility for the DSL are:

- **Liaise** with the local authority and other agencies;
- **Managing referrals** to other agencies including: the local authority children's social care in cases of suspected abuse; Police South West Counter Terrorism Unit where there is a radicalisation concern; the Disclosure and Barring Service in cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and the Police in cases where a crime may have been committed in relation to safeguarding. The DSL will also support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies;
- **Work with others** to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people subject to a child protection plan by attending child protection conferences and implementing the multiagency child protection plan; and liaise with the Local Area Designated Officer as required. DSLs should act a single point of contact for all matters of safeguarding and advice for staff, volunteers, and governors.
- **Undertake Training** to ensure the DSL (and any deputies) has the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role (updated every 2 years). Further knowledge and skills should be updated at regular intervals and shared with relevant parties as appropriate;

- **Raise Awareness** to ensure Douglas Valley Nursery School's safeguarding and child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately. The DSL will also provide an annual report to the governing body on safeguarding and child protection activity within the school;
- **Manage safeguarding information** through the collection, monitoring, reviewing, safe storage and transfer of safeguarding and child protection files (The [NSPCC](#) provides guidance on this)
- **Availability** of the DSL (or any deputies) during term time and school hours needs to be ensured for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the event of local or national lockdown, the DSL or deputy should at minimum be available on the telephone.

The role of the DSL is explained in more detail in [KCSIE 2020- Annex B](#).

Supporting Children and Young People

Douglas Valley Nursery School will consider the need for an Early Help assessment when it is identified that there are low level concerns or emerging needs. Detailed information on Early Help can be found in [Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

It is the responsibility of the education setting to initiate Early Help to identify what the family's strengths and needs are. This will inform whether the setting can support the family or whether a referral to another agency is needed. This process provides a way of recording support and interventions that have been provided by the school to the child / young person and also supports a referral for additional support that may be needed from more targeted services where a single agency has been unable to meet that need. A team around the child meeting (TAC) can be arranged to ensure that a multi-agency action plan can be developed. It is important that the child and parents voice is captured as part of this assessment and that they take ownership of the plan. This plan should be regularly reviewed up to 4 to 6 weeks until outcomes are achieved.

If at any point during the Early Help process, the risk increases and the education setting becomes concerned that the child or young person is, or is likely to suffer significant harm, then a referral will be made to children's social care.

In all cases the educational setting will consider the statutory guidance for schools and colleges, [Keeping Children Safe in Education, published by the DfE September 2021, with particular reference to Part 1: Information for all schools and colleges](#).

Douglas Valley Nursery School will support all children and young people by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum, as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Healthy relationships
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.

- Providing continuing support to a child or young person, about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the pupils new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

If at any point the education setting becomes concerned that a child or young person is at serious risk of harm they should respond appropriately. If the school is concerned that a child is at **immediate** or **imminent** risk, then they should contact Greater Manchester Police on either 111 or 999. If, however the school is concerned that a child is, or is likely to suffer serious harm but it is not imminent they should call Wigan Children's Social Care Duty Team on 01942 828300.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities

Douglas Valley Nursery School will use the same considerations for children and young people with SEND, as detailed above. However, the setting must also take into consideration that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children and young people. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's SEN or disability without further exploration (the setting must consider the child first and foremost, rather than the child's SEND).
- A higher risk of vulnerability due to factors such as a learning disability, lack of awareness, social isolation, which may contribute to risks such as online vulnerability.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children; and 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.
- Children and young people with SEN and disabilities can face a number of challenges to disclosure, which must be recognised and taken into account, including prejudice, negative responses, and low expectations.

Responding to concerns and disclosures

Reporting Concerns

All staff will be aware of their responsibility to report any safeguarding concern (no matter how small) ASAP to the DSL or DDSL using the schools prescribed practice (paper concern slip)

Responding to a disclosure

Do:

- **Create a safe environment by offering** the child a private and safe place if possible.
- **Stay calm** and reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame.
- **Tell** the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you.
- **Listen carefully** and **tell** the child what you are going to do next.
- Use the **'tell me', 'explain', 'describe'** and/or mirroring strategy.
- **Tell only the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.**
- **Record** in detail using the Welfare Concern Record without delay, using the child's own words where possible.

Do NOT:

- Take photographs of any injuries or copy any images from a child's phone onto to your own device which could be classed as illegal content or an indecent image of a child.
- Postpone or delay the opportunity for the pupil to talk.
- Take notes while the pupil is speaking or ask the pupil to write an account.
- Try to investigate the allegation yourself.
- Promise confidentiality, e.g. Say you will keep 'the secret'.
- Approach or inform the alleged abuser.

It is the responsibility of each adult in school to ensure that the D/DSL receives the record of concern without delay. In the absence of the D/DSL, staff will seek advice direct from Children's Social Care.

[Wigan Safeguarding Children Partnership have produced further information on Dealing with Disclosures from a Child or young Person.](#)

During term time, the DSL or a DDSL is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

In some circumstances, the D/DSL or member of staff seeks advice by ringing Children's Social Care.

The voice of the child is central to our safeguarding practice and pupils are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

We are committed to work in partnership with parents and carers. In most situations, we will discuss initial concerns with them. However, the D/DSL will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- Place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- Place an adult at increased risk of serious harm
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

Involving Parents and Carers

In general, the DSL will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before approaching other agencies and will seek their consent before making a referral to another agency. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

Information Sharing

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential and information is handled in line with the education settings Data Protection policy.

The Government has issued [Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners](#) Guidance that included 7 'Golden Rules' of Information Sharing in safeguarding :

The Government guidance (described by the NSPCC, 2018) is:

1. **Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers** to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information to safeguard children and cannot assume that someone else will pass on the information.

Sharing of information will be necessary for the purpose for which it's being shared, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

The update to Working Together (2018) states that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information, to keep a child safe. Consent is not required when sharing information for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of a child. Working Together (2018) recommends using the GDPR [lawful bases](#) for sharing. [Further information about this is available in Appendix B Working Together \(2018\).](#)

Key organisations who have a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are:

- The local authority.
- NHS England.
- Clinical commissioning groups.
- NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts.
- The local policing body.
- British Transport Police Authority.
- Prisons.

- National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies, Youth offending teams.
- Bodies within the education and /or voluntary sectors, and any individual to the extent that they are providing services in pursuance of section 74 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

As data controllers who process personal information we are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. The Data Protection Act requires every data controller who is processing personal information to register with the [Information Commissioner's Office](#), unless they are exempt.

Disagreements, Escalation and Resolution

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between colleagues and between agencies.

Staff must be confident and able to professionally disagree and challenge decision-making as an entirely legitimate activity. A part of our professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice. Staff are encouraged to press for re-consideration if they believe a decision to act / not act in response to a concern raised about a child is wrong. In such cases the [Wigan Safeguarding Children Partnership Case Resolution Protocol](#) (formerly Escalation Policy) can be used if necessary. If we, ourselves are challenged professionally, then we see this as an opportunity to reflect on our decision making.

Prevention

We recognise that the education setting plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children and young people by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults.

If early help is appropriate, the DSL or DDSL will contact the early help hub to ensure there is no current intervention and will generally lead on liaising with other agencies, setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and if the situation is not improving then consideration should be given to making a referral to children's social care, for assessment for statutory services.

The education settings community will;

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children and young people e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children and young people to report whether they have had happy / sad lunchtimes / playtimes / breaks
- Ensure that all pupils and students know there is a trusted adult in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know whom they should turn to for help. This will include anti-bullying work, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian,

and cycle training. Also focused work in year 6 to prepare for transition to secondary school and more personal safety / independent travel.

- Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

Allegations against staff

All Education setting and Early Years staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child.

All staff should be expected to have awareness and knowledge of Guidance on Behaviour Issues, along with the school's own Code of Conduct and Self Regulation and Behaviour policy and this should be part of induction for all new staff or volunteers.

Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers, will be given at induction, alongside information based on the [Guidance for Safer Working Practices \(2020\)](#).

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff /volunteer may have:

- 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 he/she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in our school

If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague or volunteer might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the headteacher. Where the concerns or allegations are about the headteacher, these should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

The headteacher/Chair of Governors should report the concern to the **Designated Officer for Allegations Sue Wharton- 01942 486034** lado@wigan.gov.uk

All allegations must be managed in line with the statutory guidance in Part 4 of KCSIE 2021 and the school whistleblowing procedure.

If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children / young people, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher / Head of School

The Head teacher, on all such occasions, will discuss the content of the allegation with the Designated Officer (DO).⁵

⁵ LADO process can be found on the WSCB website <http://www.wiganlscb.com/Professionals/LADO.aspx>

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher / Head of School, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors / Trustees who will consult DO, without notifying the Headteacher first. Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of Human Resources / Legal in order to make that decision and informing the DO at the earliest opportunity.

The school will follow Wigan's procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child / young person home pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a consultation with the DO.

In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors / Trustees with advice as outlined above.

We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user / volunteer in the event of an allegation arising in that context.

Whistleblowing

All staff can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the education settings safeguarding regime. Our whistleblowing procedures, which are reflected in staff training and our Code of Conduct, are in place for such concerns to be raised with headteacher

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with headteacher or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline - Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 from 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk
- A member of the governing body: Jo Sullivan – Chair of Governors

We recognise that children and young people cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitudes or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the Area Education Officer or the Designated Officer (for allegations) following the whistleblowing policy.

Whistleblowing regarding the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body (or trustees) whose contact details are readily available to staff (as pertained to setting). It's acknowledged that Whistle-blowers have the right to remain anonymous, however identifying yourself may assist with any further investigations.

Physical Intervention and the use of reasonable force

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child or young person is endangering him / herself or others.

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children / young people. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means using no more force than necessary and staff should refer to the section on 'use of reasonable force' within the behaviour policy. Such events should be recorded by completing a serious incident log and signed by a witness.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention or reasonable force will be appropriately trained in an accredited positive handling technique. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child or young person may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that appropriate touch is acceptable in the context of working with children and young people, and all staff are aware of [The Guidance for Safer Working Practices \(2020\)](#) to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

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

The Local Authority requires Education Settings to follow the [Wigan Council Children Missing from Education Policy and Procedure](#). Further guidance is detailed in [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#) and [Further guidance on this has been produced by the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures](#). The school should hold at least 2 current contact numbers per child to ensure reasonable attempts can be made to locate missing children/ families.

Staff report immediately to the D/DSL, if they know of any child who may be:

- Missing – whereabouts unknown and unable to make contact (as a result of making reasonable enquiries as outlined in [Section 10 of the Children Act 2004](#))
- Missing education – (compulsory school age (5-16) with no school place and not electively home educated).

The designated teacher for CLA and care leavers is to discuss any unauthorised / unexplained absence of any children who are looked after with the Virtual School Team, when required. Should a pupil's attendance become a cause for concern it is advisable to intervene early to prevent entrenched non-school attendance. School should contact the Early Help Hub (EHH) to initiate an Early Help, if appropriate.

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children can abuse their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding 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 in the school at risk.
- Is violent.
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting).

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, school staff will inform the DSL and record the allegation.

- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the child(ren) who experience the abuse and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed;
- The DSL will contact the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and other agencies if appropriate.

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

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour.
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different vulnerable groups—ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Developing positive reciprocal relationships with children so they feel safe and secure with staff, supporting them to talk to staff to ensure their wishes are understood.
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Including Peer on Peer Abuse

- This is a form of peer on peer abuse, which may include sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting).

Dealing with such cases are complex and the DSL will take a lead role in managing the situation on a case by case basis. However, all staff should ensure that:

- They never forward or copy an image from a child's phone to their own or any other device, which could be categorised as an indecent image/ unlawful content.
- All who experience abuse are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Those who experience abuse should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- Nor should those who experience abuse ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- In addition, support should be made available for the perpetrator of sexual abuse to understand motivations behind the abuse and challenge attitudes. It is understood that children who abuse other children may well have been abused themselves.

- In addition to existing advice about managing a disclosure contained in this policy, staff will follow [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice 2018](#).

The DSL will manage any incidents in line with the guidance contained in Part 5 KCSIE 2021 and [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021](#).

Relationships education is not compulsory in early years education, however the early years curriculum at Douglas Valley includes a focus on respectful relationships, equality and emotional health and wellbeing at an appropriate level for young children in line with our school ethos.

[Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education. Colleges may cover relevant issues through tutorials.](#)

Private Fostering Arrangements

Where schools and colleges become aware that a pupil (a child under the age of 16 or 18 if disabled) may be in a [private fostering arrangement](#)/ is provided with care and accommodation by someone who is not a close relative, for longer than 28 consecutive days in that person's home, they should raise this, in the first instance, with the DSL. The school or college should notify the local authority by contacting Wigan Children's Duty team on **01942 828300** Once notified, the local authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child and assess the child's circumstances.

Young Carers

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol. Our school recognises the impact that being a Young Carer can have on pupils, and the importance of identifying those young people so that appropriate support can be provided. WSP coordinates our local Young Carers Strategy and [Wigan Council have produced some useful information for young carers, families and professionals](#).

Where a pupil / student at our school is identified as having additional support needs due to being a young carer, or where a multi-agency approach may be required, our school uses the Early Help Framework and routes into the StartWell Service.

Supporting Staff

Douglas Valley Nursery School will work with partners in the safeguarding partnership to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people. We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate. DSL's should make use of support available by the Local Authority and the partnerships Safeguarding Team. DSLs will have oversight of Early Help and Child Protection plans with appropriate structure in place to monitor progress and outcomes in partnership with Children's Social Care and other stakeholders (check levels)

Equalities Statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and families' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, race, economic condition, disability, and religion. With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be part of schools' wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, education settings should be alert to a change in children's and young person's behaviour that could indicate that they are in need of protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children and young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Our school safeguarding policy will therefore be written to comply with the schools duty [under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) in accordance with [the Department of Education advice for schools regarding The Prevent Duty](#), and aligns with the processes described in the [Wigan's Prevent Policy and Procedure](#).

[Educate Against Hate](#) is a website launched by Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

Extra-familial harm/ Contextual Safeguarding

Staff should be aware of the harms that can happen to children outside of the family and should consider the contexts with which harm takes place. An understanding of a child/young person's life outside of school and the family home is vital to provide a full picture of the child's needs and their exposure to harm.

Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control

We recognise the significant impact domestic abuse and coercive control can have on children and young people, therefore we operate in partnership with [Operation Encompass](#), a system which facilitates the sharing of information relating to domestic incidents where children live or frequent. Any incidents of domestic violence reported to the police will be notified to the education setting to effectively support the child(ren) / young person. Staff should be aware of the impact that domestic violence and coercive control has upon children, both as witnesses and by being forced to collude in this.

If you wish to speak to an educational/child psychologist following an Operation Encompass referral you are now able to contact the Operation Encompass Teachers' National Helpline, 8.00am to 11.00am, Monday to Friday on 0845 646 0890
Staff can also [access training on Operation Encompass](#).

Key Safeguarding Areas

In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that the school has a responsibility to address and these include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking
- Child criminal exploitation
- All types of peer on peer abuse
- Domestic violence and abuse and intimate teenage relationship abuse
- So called Honour Based Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Serious violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Child and adolescent mental health
- Faith abuse
- Radicalisation
- Private fostering
- Online sexual abuse
- Online safety
- Attendance
- Children and the court system
- Sexual violence and harassment between children
- Children with a family member in prison
- Homelessness
- Alternative provision

For further information on these key topics also see Appendix B

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our child protection policy and procedures will be monitored and updated by:

- Governing Body visits to the education setting
- SLT drop ins and discussions with children, young people, and staff
- Pupil / student surveys and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of exclusion and attendance data
- Scrutiny of GB minutes
- Logs of bullying / racist / behaviour incidents for SLT and GB to monitor
- Review of parental concerns and parent / carer questionnaires
- Review of the use of intervention strategies such as nurture room and isolation room.

Corona Virus (COVID-19)

If school closed for further lockdown KCSiE (2021) remains in force throughout the response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Our school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our Children and Young people. Where the DSL and safeguarding team, has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person and their family. Details of this plan must be recorded as should a record of contacts made. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Our school also considers in these times, family circumstances can change quickly and therefore new families may arise as in need or vulnerable. We will keep communication with all families open which can include remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits which will be recorded. We aim to engage with every family at least once a week. We will also ensure that families are aware of how they may contact our pastoral care/ safeguarding team for support. This will be via e mail and displayed on our website.

Our school will share safeguarding and pastoral support messages on its website and social media pages. We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. We will take this into consideration when providing work and updates families and students.

As a school will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and where appropriate recorded.

Corona Virus (COVID-19) returning to school

[The Department for Education has issued guidance for schools who are open during the pandemic.](#)

DSL and DDSL's will be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate, and agencies and services should prepare to work together to actively look for signs of harm.

Our school understands that guidance from the government changes frequently and will continue to revise any Corona Virus addendums through the period of COVID-19.

Appendix A

Types of abuse and neglect

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#) however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

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

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.

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 [follow the Bruising Protocol in non mobile children.](#)
- 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. Consideration should also be given to animal bites. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite or the circumstances around it.

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

Scars

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
- Scapegoated 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 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 irresponsive 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

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Children 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 child where the 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, 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 of exploitation

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.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can take many forms, ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. CSE involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Indicators include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- 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, 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.

Child Criminal Exploitation/ County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Consideration should be given to the trafficking element of this area of safeguarding and if appropriate a referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism. [Staff should be aware of the Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.](#)

Indicators Include:

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- Being found in areas away from home
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Unexplained absences from school, college, training or work
- Unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Using sexual, drug-related, or violent language you would not expect them to know
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly disheveled
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

Gangs and youth violence

Teachers and designated staff have a range of powers in relation to discipline to tackle problems, including violence, in the school environment. Such powers cover disciplinary actions, the power to restrain violent pupils, and the power to search pupils for prohibited items.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of the signs that indicate a child is at risk of, or involved with serious violence, this includes: absence from school, change of friendship group, unexplained injuries, self-harm, unexplained gifts or possessions. [Staff should also be aware of relevant guidance: Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

Drugs

As part of school's duty to promote pupils' wellbeing, we have a role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities (health and wellbeing/Healthy Schools) and to support the [Government's drug strategy \(2017\)](#). Our school will support students by providing information, advice and support via the curriculum and give students the confidence, resilience and risk management skills to resist risky behaviours and recover. The Department of Education and Association of Chief Police Officers have provided [Drug Advice for Schools to support this aim](#). Schools also have the power to search pupils for drugs where there is a belief this student is in possession of criminal property.

Faith abuse

The National Action Plan to Tackle Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief is intended to help raise awareness of the issue of child abuse linked to faith or belief and to encourage practical steps to be taken to prevent such abuse. Schools should promote equality and awareness around cultural and religious practices.

Honour Based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' Abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If you have concerns about an individual, the following helplines will be able to support you

Honour Network (Karma Nirvana): 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)

Government Forced Marriage Unit 0207 008 0151 or 0207 008 1500 (out of hours)

In emergencies, dial 999. [The Home Office have produced further information on forced marriage.](#)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, individuals and groups from the wider communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There are a range of potential risk indicators which may indicate that a child may be subjected to FGM or may have suffered FGM. These are detailed in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation issued by the home office.](#)

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL/ DDSL with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police (KCSIE 2020). This should be completed in consultation with the DSL but the responsibility of reporting lies with the staff member who identified the concern.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the child – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a child's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the child
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps the child be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening

- 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

The 'One Chance' rule- As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges take action **without delay**.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer or Peer Abuse includes:

- Bullying, including cyber bullying

- Physical Abuse including intimate partner abuse
- Sexual Violence including CSE, Sexual Harassment, Sexting and Upskirting
- Initiation and Hazing type violence including rituals, challenges, and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation as a way of initiating a person into a group
- Gang violence, threats or coercion

All schools are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the [Equality Act 2010](#). Schools should tackle prejudice and promote understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The definition that has been adopted by the government and should be used when considering prejudice related incidents 'A prejudice related incident is any incident which is perceived to be prejudice by the victim or any other person'

Domestic violence, coercive control and abuse, Gender-based violence and teenage relationship abuse

Domestic abuse (over 16 years) and teenage relationship abuse (under 16 years) involves any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are, or have been in relationships or family members regardless of gender or sexuality and is applicable to teenagers as teenage relationship abuse or intimate partner abuse. The curriculum should enable children and adolescents to understand what constitutes a healthy relationship, consent and tackle gendered stereotypes.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual Violence and harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all children involved are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. The law says anyone under the age of 13 can never legally give consent. This means that anyone who engages in any sexual activity with a child who is 12 or younger is breaking the law. Sexual activity with a child who is under 13 should always result in a child protection referral.

Sexually harmful incidents should be viewed by professionals as a safeguarding concern and both victim and perpetrator should be supported. The school should have systems in place to support both students in the school setting to feel safe and heard should an incident occur. School staff should be alert to negative sexualised or gendered language and behaviours and should be robust in tackling these, not brushing them off as 'part of growing up', 'boys will be boys' or 'banter'.

Online Sexual Abuse

Online sexual abuse involved the use of technology to manipulate, exploit, coerce or intimidate a child to (but not limited to) engage in sexual activity, produce sexual material/content, force a child to look at or watch sexual activities, encourage a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or groom a child in preparation for sexual abuse (either online or offline).

It can also involve directing others to, or coordinating, the abuse of children online. As with other forms of sexual abuse, online abuse can be misunderstood by the child and others as being consensual, occurring without the child's immediate recognition or understanding of abusive or exploitative conduct. In addition, fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor. No child under the age of 18 can consent to being abused or exploited. Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse, it can involve serious organised crime and it can be carried out by either adults or peers.

Online Safety

The topic of online safety is considerable and can be linked to issues such as child sexual exploitation, bullying and radicalisation. Issues can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; e.g. Pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; e.g. commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; e.g. making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

The school will ensure it is proactive in addressing online safety through:

- Education of pupils through the curriculum;
- Keeping parents up to date on how to support keeping their children to keep safe online; the government has released new guidance for parents to support children's online activity [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#)
- Reviewing online safety practices as part of a whole school approach to online safety;
- Filtering and monitoring to protect users but not leading to unreasonable restrictions;
- Staff training which is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach;
- Information sharing to enable the school community to be kept up to date.

[For further information see government guidance Teaching online safety in school](#)

Child and Adolescent Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the DSL/DDSL. Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our children's physical

health, relationships, education and to achieving their potential. The school should promote positive self-esteem and tackling behaviours such as bullying that can impact a young person's self-esteem. Pastoral care should be available to those with mental health concerns as well as staff being aware of pathways for young people to Early Help and CAHMS.

Fabricated or induced illness

[This supplementary guidance, Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced \(2008\)](#), sets out a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together where illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child by a carer who has parenting responsibilities for them.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Further information can be found in relation to local authorities duties to intervene at an early stage in the [Homelessness Code of Guidance](#).

Alternative Provision

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

Children and the Court System

A child may at some point experience the court system for a number of different reasons this may include being a witness to a crime or it could be as a result of child care arrangement being made in the Family Court. Whatever the reasons it is important the child is supported through this process.

Children with a Family Member in Prison

Children and young people whereby a family member is in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders \(NICCO\)](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in KCSiE 2020 - Annex A.

Appendix B

Key Documentation, procedures and guidance

- [Advice to schools and colleges on gang and youth violence \(2013\)](#)
- [Alternative provision \(2016\)](#)

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools \(2016\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#)
- [Corona Virus support for parents and carers to keep children safe online \(2021\)](#)
- [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines \(2017\)](#)
- [Designated teacher for looked after children \(2018\)](#)
- [DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools \(2012\)](#)
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(2018\)](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school \(2013\)](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England \(2017\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Covid Addendum \(2020\)](#)
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers \(2018\).](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information \(2015\)](#)
- [Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(2016\)](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(2017\)](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales \(2015\).](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after children \(2018\)](#)
- [Protocol for injuries on non mobile children \(2017\)](#)
- [Safeguarding Children with fabricated or induced illness \(2008\)](#)
- [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice \(2018\)](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years \(2015\)](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(2021\)](#)
- [School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures \(2013\)](#)
- [Supervision of activity with children \(2012\)](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(2015\)](#)
- [Teaching online safety in schools](#)
- [The Equality Act \(2010\)](#)
- [The Teachers' Standards \(2013\)](#)
- [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(2013\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#)