



ST. MARY'S
ACADEMY TRUST

**St Mary's Academy
Trust (SMAT)
Safeguarding and
Child Protection
Policy**

Every child, Every family and
Every day underpins all our work.

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St Mary's Academy Trust (SMAT) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Aims of this Policy

To ensure that children are effectively safeguarded from the potential risk of harm at schools within SMAT and that the safety and well-being of the children is of the highest priority in all aspects of the school's work. To help the school maintain its ethos whereby staff, pupils, parents and governors feel able to articulate any concerns comfortably, safe in the knowledge that effective action will be taken as appropriate. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and we have a whole school approach to safeguarding in and outside of school.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Purpose of this Policy

To ensure that all members of the school community:

- Are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and receive regular training to support this.
- Are aware of the systems and policies in place to support safeguarding, including this policy, the behaviour policy, the staff code of conduct, any child missing from education and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Know the procedures that should be followed if they have a cause for concern.
- Know the processes for local early help and their role in it.
- Know where to go to find additional information regarding safeguarding.
- Are aware of the key indicators relating to child abuse and all staff know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or exploited.
- Are able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- Fully support the school's commitment to safeguarding and child protection.
- To ensure that wherever possible Safeguarding is proactive and not reactive.

1 Principles

1.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 gives maintained schools a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This policy is written in conjunction with "Keeping children safe in Education September 2024", Education and Inspection Act 2006, Working

Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the Children and Families Act 2014. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, wherever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

1.2 This school recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, and protect them from harm and respond to child abuse.

1.3 We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations has a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged. We have a duty to ensure that every child has a voice and that their perspective, opinions and feelings are listened to and recorded. We can reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We know that a victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

1.4 We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our teaching and learning, extracurricular activities, pastoral care and extended school activities. In order to achieve this, all members of staff (including volunteers and governors) across the MAT, in whatever capacity, will at all times act proactively in child welfare matters especially where there is a possibility that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

1.5 The MAT seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The MAT hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see their school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

1.6 Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. In all cases, the information provided by the child will be recorded on the schools safeguarding system. Our children, through regular curriculum input, should recognise when they are at risk and how and where to get help when they need it. Staff can never promise confidentiality, especially where concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

1.7 In our schools, if we have suspicions that a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being is being, or is likely to be, harmed, or that they are being neglected, we will take appropriate action in accordance with the procedures issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.

We know that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally and we know that children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. There may also be cases where it is not a direct report but communicated via a friend or an overheard conversation. If our staff have any concerns, they know to act immediately rather than wait to be told.

1.8 As a consequence, we

- assert that teachers and other members of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) in our schools are an integral part of the child safeguarding process;
- accept totally that safeguarding children is an appropriate function for all members of staff in our schools, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities.
- recognise that safeguarding children in our schools is a responsibility for all staff, including supply staff and volunteers, the Governing body and the Board of Trustees;
- will ensure through training and supervision that all staff, supply staff and volunteers in our schools are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and know how to report concerns or suspicions;
- will designate senior member(s) of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). They will act as a source of expertise and advice, and is responsible for coordinating action within each individual school and liaising with other agencies;
- ensure (through the designated members of staff) that staff with designated responsibility for child protection will receive appropriate training to the minimum standard set out by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership and also receive annual up dates.
- will share our concerns with others who need to know, and assist in any referral process;
- will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers who have suspicion that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, refer such concerns to the Designated member of staff, who will refer on to Children’s Social Care in accordance with the procedures issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- safeguard the welfare of children whilst in our schools, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, disability or special educational needs, cyber bullying or internet technologies;
- will ensure that all staff are aware of the child protection procedures established by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership and, where appropriate, the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them;
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees that all people who work in our schools are suitable to work with children. Those responsible for recruitment will have had the appropriate training.
- will act swiftly and make appropriate referrals where an allegation is made that a member of staff has committed an offence against a child, harmed a child, or acted in a way that calls into question their suitability for working with children. All school staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through teenage years. In the first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

2 Designated Member of Staff

2.1 The designated senior member of staff (designated person) for safeguarding protection in this school is: Mrs Catherine Green (Headteacher).

In the absence of the Headteacher, these matters will be dealt with by: Mrs Rachael Parish (Assistant Headteacher), Mrs Michelle Wilkinson (Parent Support Advisor) or Mrs Laura Shepherd-Woodhall (EYFS leader).

2.2 If the concerns are relating to the Headteacher, these matters will be dealt with by: Mr T Banham (CEO).

In their absence, or if the concerns are relating to the CEO, these matters will be dealt with by: Mrs T Rodger (Chair of Trust).

2.3 The designated person is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers, governors and trustees to draw upon.

2.4 Our schools recognise that:

- The designated person need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the school management structure to carry out the duties of the post – they must therefore be a senior member of staff in our schools.
- All members of staff (including volunteers) must be made aware of who this person is and what their role is.
- The designated person will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within our schools over child protection cases.
- The designated person will need to liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies.
- They should possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns.
- Appropriate training and support should be given.
- The designated person is the first person to whom members of staff report concerns.
- The designated person is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the BSCP.
- The designated person is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff. The Principal or Head of School is responsible for any allegations made against members of staff, unless the allegation is about them and then it is the responsibility of the CEO.

2.5 To be effective they will:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within their school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm.
- Have awareness that schools and colleges have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the importance of understanding their role in the safeguarding partner arrangements that have been in place since 29th September 2019. Information about the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership can be accessed [here](#).
- Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Ask one of the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) to investigate further where they have concerns that a referral has not been dealt with in accordance with the child protection procedures. Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers in our schools, and regular visitors (such as Education Welfare Officers, trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can access readily, this policy or a summary of the policy. Each school must have a robust visitors signing in and out procedure.
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated Trustee / governor for child protection regarding this.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns and ensure that these are held in a secure place.

- Ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals. Raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child. Each school to post a copy of their policy on the school website.
- Where children leave the school roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained, separately from the main file, and addressed to the designated person for child protection.
- Where a child leaves and the new school is not known, or parents or carers have elected to home school, ensure that the local authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing pupils.

2.6 The designated person also has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. They should:

- Attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case.
- Have a working knowledge of how Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership operates and the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these when required, to enhance the implementation of the Child Protection Plan.
- Attend any relevant or refresher training courses, including PREVENT, Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment, and Keeping Children Safe in Education and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers, governors and Trustees.
- Make themselves (and any deputies) known to all staff, volunteers, governors and Trustees (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in child protection. This should be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the designated teacher immediately.

3 Designated Governor and Trustee

The Designated Local Committee Member for Safeguarding is: Mrs Susan Richmond.

3.1 Child protection is important. Where appropriate, the Governors will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction.

Governing bodies and proprietors should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

3.2 The Governors will ensure that the designated member of staff for child protection is given sufficient time to carry out their duties, including accessing training.

3.3 The Governors will review safeguarding practices in the school on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:

- The school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school;
- Termly meetings are held with the designated safeguarding governor with an agreed focus. (Records of these meetings will be kept);
- Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practices in this matter, and that staff receive training where appropriate;

- Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers
- The school follows the procedures agreed by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership, and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority;
- Only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the school, or work here in a voluntary capacity;
- Where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are raised, take appropriate action in line with BSCP Allegations against Staff Procedures and the Trusts Disciplinary Procedures.

4 Designated Member of Staff for Looked after Children

4.1 The designated senior member of staff (designated person) for Looked after Children in this school is: Mrs Rachael Parish (Assistant Headteacher).

4.2 Governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies must appoint a designated teacher and should work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. On commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, designated teachers will also have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. The designated teacher must have appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience.

Statutory guidance contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher.

[Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-and-previously-looked-after-children)

4.3 Virtual School Head

Virtual School Heads manage pupil premium plus for looked after children; they receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority. In maintained schools and academies, the Designated Teacher should work with the Virtual School Head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

As with designated teachers, on commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 virtual school heads will have responsibilities towards children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England or Wales. Their primary role for this group will be the provision of information and advice to relevant parties. In addition to their statutory duties, the role of virtual school heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

5 Recruitment

5.1 In order to ensure that children are protected whilst in our schools, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

5.2 We accept that it is our responsibility to follow the guidance set out in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education", in particular we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school:

- Robust identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be i.e. checking their name on their birth certificate matches their application form and they have evidence of legal name change if applicable.
- Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine.
- Professional references prior to offering employment.
- Medical Clearance.
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.
- DBS check e.g., through birth certificate, passport, new style driving licence, etc...
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act when applicable (guidance under Childcare Act 2018).
- Section 128 Prohibition / Sanction Information disclosures / Barred List Checks where applicable (Teachers, HLTA, Management, Trustees, Governors, SLT) using the Check a Teachers Record Service.
- Online searches as part of the due diligence process of shortlisting (candidates are informed that online searches may be done) Further Identity checks for those individuals who have lived and worked outside of the UK including proof of EU Settlement.
- Completion of separate form in accordance with Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

6 Volunteers

6.1 We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, will be recruited in line with the Recruitment Policy i.e. as all paid employees are recruited

7 Induction and Training

7.1 All new members of staff will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.

7.2 All new staff to our schools (including volunteers) will receive child protection information (“What To Do If You Suspect A Child Is Being Abused”) and a copy of this policy on starting their work at the school. Staff will also be directed to “Keeping Children Safe in Education document September 2024”.

7.3 All staff will be expected to attend training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The school will provide this training through a designated person. Any new staff or volunteers who have not completed their Safeguarding Awareness Training will, as part of their induction, complete online safeguarding training.

7.4 Staff will attend refresher training at least every three years, and the designated person every two years. All staff will receive safeguarding updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

7.5 Staff visiting the school for short periods of time e.g. 1 day supply cover, will receive information in relation to designated safeguarding and expected procedures. (See the Induction Policy)

7.6 All adults not employed by school are strongly encouraged to attend safeguarding training. Attendance at school training will be open to parent helpers, volunteers, extended schools providers, governors, Trustees and any other parties that come in to contact with children on a regular basis. These staff will also be signposted to the online training available via the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership website.

7.7 For staff who are unable to access face to face Safeguarding awareness training the school expects them to complete online training as above. All ECTs and newly appointed staff are expected to have completed Safeguarding awareness training as part of their induction process.

7.8 All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; upskirting, sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. All Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse and that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that it is never acceptable or to be tolerated.

7.9 All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

7.10 All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the following documents -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence> and
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adultscounty-lines>

8 Dealing with Concerns

8.1 Members of staff and volunteers are not required by the school to investigate suspicions; if somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they must always refer such concerns in line with DFE and BSCP procedures. A 'Cause for Concern' is an action, observation or discussion that makes you feel anxious or worried about the well-being or safety of a child. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

1. Referral to Childrens Social Care (ROC – Record of Contact)

[Barnsley referral form](#)

2. Report a crime to the Police

[Report a crime | South Yorkshire Police](#)

Anyone can make referral. Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Reporting child abuse to your local council directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

In Foundation Stage any incidents/ allegations of abuse must be dealt with as outlined in the welfare requirements of EYFS.

8.2 To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below;

- All causes for concern must be recorded immediately on CPOMs. In the case of any technical problems, staff should record the information and share with DSLs as soon as possible.
- This must then be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy immediately, who will decide on the appropriate actions, completing any follow up actions on CPOMS.

- A vulnerable pupils and family live file would be raised on CPOMS. This will include a summary of the incident(s) and any agreed follow up action and/or contact with external agencies. Any further discussions, telephone calls or meetings in relation to the child must be recorded on CPOMS.

Records should include:

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

Designated leaders and other appropriate adults will hold a meeting at least monthly to discuss and review all live and dormant case files. This provides the opportunity for designated leader to:

- Monitor that agreed actions have taken place.
- Evaluate the impact of these actions.
- Agree next steps.
- Quality assure written records.

Further meetings may be held should circumstances arise where more regular meetings are needed. All further involvement and documentation must be stored in this file and nowhere else. Files will be stored in a secure place.

Staff are aware that Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur to make assessments and share any such information with all parties involved. This will allow any Local Authority social care assessment and any other agencies to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

8.3 If it is felt that if concerns are not dealt with appropriately by the Designated Safeguarding Lead it should be further raised with them, if at this point there are still concerns the LADO should be contacted – 01226 772341.

Procedure in case of Designated Safeguarding Leader absence:

Contact other designated leads, if not possible

Phone designated leader and ask permission to access files.

8.4 We will ensure that all members of staff and employees are familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents and with the requirements of Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.

8.5 Where any member of staff fails to report their concerns, this may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

9 Safeguarding in our Schools

9.1 As well as ensuring that we address child protection concerns, we will also ensure that children who attend our schools are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.

9.2 To this end, this policy must be seen in light of the MAT's policies on:

- Personal, Social and Health Education Policy and Sex and Relationships Education Policy; child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate.
- Anti-Bullying Policy; the school will also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, behaviours or actions that promote extremism, prejudice based and discriminatory or bullying that is

homophobic in nature, cyber bullying or where there appear to be links to domestic abuse in the family home.

- Attendance Policy.
- Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy (in line with KCSIE).
- Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy and Code of Conduct for staff.
- Equality Policy.
- Behaviour for Learning Policy/ Behaviour and Attitudes Policy
- Health & Safety Policy.
- Use of Reasonable Force and Restraint Policy.
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Internet & E-safety policy.
- Whistle Blowing policy.
- Induction policy.
- Data Protection and GDPR policy.
- Children Absent and Missing in Education Policy.

10 Photographing Children

10.1 We understand that parents like to take photos of, or video record their children in the school play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes. **However, we kindly request that if these recordings or photographs include other children, particularly those whose parents have not consented to such sharing, they should not be shared on social media or any public platform.**

10.2 However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

10.3 We will not allow visiting professionals (e.g. students, sports coaches, visiting professionals delivering other activities) to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without the parent's permission.

10.4 We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

10.5 The school cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions that goes on to be shared by parents or members of the public on social media or any other public platform.

11 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

11.1 The school, and all members of staff at the school, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), states: 'Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.'

With paragraph 115 stating: 'As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within

the school or college and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.'

11.2 Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know. Relationships and associations that staff have in school and outside (including online), may have an implication for the safeguarding of children in the school. Where this is the case, staff must inform school.

11.3 Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the designated member of staff for child protection. The designated member will then contact relevant agencies. Should the child be at immediate risk or the risk is likely to escalate as a result of sharing concern, the parents will not be notified of a referral. In all other cases parents will be notified by an allocated member of staff.

11.4 Online safety – We are aware that as schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, we ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to safeguard our children within school.

Whilst filtering and monitoring are an important part of the online safety we also have a whole school approach to online safety. This policy makes reference to the use of mobile technology in the school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

Additional information to support governing bodies and proprietors keep their children safe online (including when they are online at home) is provided in Appendix 4.

12 Conduct of Staff

12.1 Our schools have a duty to ensure that high standards of professional behaviour exist between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

12.2 At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- cultural and gender stereotyping
- dealing with sensitive information
- giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, social networking websites and through online gaming
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties

12.3 If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, we will view this as misconduct, and take appropriate action.

12.4 An agreed Code of Conduct in relation to safeguarding has been agreed and adopted by all adults and staff working with children in schools across SMAT, any member of staff who does not adhere to the policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

12.5 An agreed Whistle Blowing policy in relation to safeguarding (appendix 1) has been agreed in order to support the school ethos where pupils and staff can talk freely about concerns knowing they will be listened to and appropriate action taken.

12.6 There are a range of other mechanisms in place to ensure that pupils feel comfortable to express their concerns to adults for example:

- To the school Learning Mentor, appropriate Key Worker or via concern boxes
- The Student Wellbeing Officer through a face to face or wellbeing email
- Through encouragement to discuss issues following school assemblies
- Via the school council and ambassador meetings
- An open approach to discussing issues with staff
- Through the Student Safe and Wellbeing Survey
- Through the online QR code found in secondary school planners

13 Physical Contact and Restraining

13.1 Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff will only do this in line with school policy. (see Use of Force or Control to restrain pupils Policy)

14 Safeguarding concerns and Allegations made about Staff, including Supply Teachers, Volunteers and Contractors

14.1 If anyone makes an allegation that any member of staff (including supply staff and any volunteer or Governor) may have:

- Committed an offence against a child
- Placed a child at risk of significant harm
- Behaved in a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

14.2 The allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by BSCP. Whilst schools and colleges are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the full facts so that the Agency can take the matter forward, and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

14.3 The Headteacher, rather than the designated member of staff will handle such allegations, unless the allegation is against the Headteacher, when the CEO will handle the school's response.

14.4 The Headteacher (or nominated Senior Leader)) will collate basic information about the allegation, and report these without delay to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO will discuss the concerns and offer advice and guidance on how the situation will be managed and if a strategy meeting will be required.

14.5 If the allegation is in relation to the Headteacher follow guidance within the Policy 'Allegations Against Members of Staff and Volunteers' and Whistle Blowing Policy.

14.6 There must be procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence. They must also consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State via the Teaching Regulation Agency.

14.7 As part of the whole school and college approach to safeguarding, SMAT promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

14.8 The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

14.9 If any member of staff has social care involvement (on a personal level) they must report it to HR. The HR team will share this information with the Headteacher.

15 Allegations made by a Child against a Child

15.1 If a child makes an allegation that another child may have:

- Committed an offence against a child
- Placed a child at risk of significant harm

The allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by BSCP. Or in the case of a child in Children's Centre or Foundation Stage the allegation will be dealt with in line with EYFS Statutory Welfare Requirements.

16 Before and After School Activities

16.1 Where the Governing Body transfers control of use of school premises to bodies (such as sports clubs) to provide out of school hours activities, we will ensure that these bodies have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

17 Contracted Services

17.1 Where the Governing Bodies contracts its services to outside providers, we will ensure that these providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the provider and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

18 Alternative Provision

18.1 Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs. Pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, and we are aware of the additional risk of harm that these pupils may be vulnerable to. We follow the DFE Statutory Guidance in regard to alternative provision and education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

19 Elective Home Education

19.1 We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with the child's best interests at heart. However, we know that this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

The school will inform the LA of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll. We will also engage in coordinated meetings with parents / carers, the LA and other key professionals. Referrals to other agencies may be made if deemed appropriate. DFE Guidance sets out the roles of Local Authorities and schools are also aware of the guidance.

20 Parents and Carers

20.1 This policy will be available to download from the school website. Paper copies are available on request from the school office.

21 Provision to help Pupils stay safe

21.1 Safeguarding permeates through all aspects of the wider school curriculum. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. Schools should consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

The following examples are not exhaustive but provide a summary of how safeguarding is promoted at schools across SMAT.

Through a more personalised PSHCE/Citizenship programme that specifically meets the needs of our children, they learn to engage with others in a safe and mutually respectful way. Our robust anti-bullying policy is reinforced regularly.

Pupils who have particular needs or difficulties in these areas are supported by a range of social and emotional support strategies and programmes, as well as receiving additional individual support from parents and staff.

Initiatives such as Peer Mediators, Sports leaders, Super stars, Student Ambassadors, Natural Leaders, School Council and Bikeability, along with highly effective work with other agencies ensure that children are well-placed to keep themselves and other children safe in their everyday lives.

Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which has been compulsory from September 2020.

Schools have flexibility to decide how they discharge their duties effectively within the first year of compulsory teaching and are encouraged to take a phased approach (if needed) when introducing these subjects. The statutory guidance can be found here: [Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education.](#)

Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Children: Whistle Blowing

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Headteacher. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues, or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Don't think "what if I'm wrong" - think "what if I'm right".

Reasons for whistleblowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistleblowing

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Approach the Headteacher.
- If your concern is about your immediate Manager/ Headteacher, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school, contact the CEO, or the Local Authority Designated Officer
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest.
- Put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries, however, to maintain confidentiality, detailed information cannot be shared.
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

Self reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health

problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Further advice and support

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, HR department and/or your professional representative or trade union.

As an alternative route for staff, the NSPCC advice is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk [Whistleblowing Advice Line | NSPCC](#)
"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong" (reproduced with acknowledgement to "Sounding the Alarm" – Barnardos)

Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Issues affecting children.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#)

They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children who are absent from education or missing from education

All staff should be aware that children being absent, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, risk of forced marriage or honour-based abuse.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

SMAT operate first day absence calls - our attendance Officers will contact parent/carers on the first day of absence, using the emergency contacts (2 or more obtained) given on their annual contact form if they have not let the school know by letter or telephone as to why their child is not at school. This will be followed up and the parents / carers will be contacted each day until a valid reason has been given. This will include following up absences from FS1 on first day of absence (though as Nursery is non-statutory the absence will not be followed up with ATT letters). Should absence persist school and the EWO will engage with the parents, possibly through a home visit. (See specific Attendance policy)

At secondary level, if pupils leave site, parents and carers will be contacted to inform them their child has left site. If staff are unable to contact parents/carers they will discuss the situation with the deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads to decide whether to report them missing with the police. If parents/carers cannot locate their child they should also be advised to report them as missing.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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 into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be

progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties:

[Homelessness Reduction Act: policy factsheets - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/factsheets/homelessness-reduction-act-policy-factsheets)

The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation:

Children with special educational needs and disabilities or health issues

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), children subject to an Educational Health Care Plan, or who have certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

Children who are LGBTQIA+ (LGBTQIA+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), intersex, asexual, and others. The "plus" represents other sexual identities, including pansexual and Two-Spirit).

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBTQIA+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBTQIA+ can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBTQIA+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBTQIA+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Appendix 3: Definitions and Symptoms of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse – physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Included within the appendix are also other forms of abuse that may occur.

The list of symptoms given is not exhaustive or comprehensive but consists of frequently observed symptoms. It is important to remember that most abuse involves more than one main type, for example, sexual and emotional abuse may be recognised together. These symptoms, for example cuts and grazes, may also be accidental and not a sign of abuse.

Physical Abuse

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

Symptoms:

Behaviour changes/wet bed/withdrawal/regression, finger marks.

Frequent unexplained injuries, broken bones.

Afraid of physical contact, cuts and grazes.

Violent behaviour during role play, burns.

Unwillingness to change clothes, cowering.

Aggressive language and use of threats.

Bruising in unusual areas.

Changing explanation of injuries.

Not wanting to go home with parent or carer.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

Symptoms:

Lack of appropriate clothing, unkempt.

Cold – complaining of body sores.

Complaining of hunger.

Urine smells.

Lack of parental engagement.

Concerns with social interactions.

Behaviour presentation.

Disrespectful behaviour.

Concerns with exploitation and anti-social behaviour.

Bullying and harassment.

Lack of confidence – low self-esteem

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Symptoms:

Inappropriate behaviour and language.

Changes in demeanour and presentation.

Rejecting physical contact or demanding attention, rocking.

Physical evidence – marks, bruising.

Over frequent toileting, soiling, excessive visits to medical.

Drawings – inappropriate knowledge.

Relationships with other adults or children for example, being overfamiliar.

Female Genital Mutilation.

At SMAT we believe that all our pupils should be kept safe from harm. Female Genital Mutilation affects girls particularly from North African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone.

Post-FGM Symptoms include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- unusual behaviour after a lengthy absence
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Longer Term problems include:

- difficulties urinating or incontinence
- frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- menstrual problems
- kidney damage and possible failure
- cysts and abscesses
- pain when having sex
- infertility
- complications during pregnancy and childbirth
- emotional and mental health problems

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it alone.

Domestic violence, including where they see, hear or experience its effects can have a significant impact on a child's social, emotional and mental health.

This may be communicated to schools via Operation Encompass.

Symptoms:

Visibly upset.

Withdrawn - not wanting to socialise.

Out of character behaviour.

Aggression.

Self-harm.

Lack of confidence and low self-esteem.

Isolation from peers.

Fear of authority.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to country lines), radicalisation and consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

• **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at increased risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) – CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include noncontact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- Child criminal exploitation: lines - County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

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

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in County Lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of [local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation](#).

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. 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. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

- Cyberbullying – this can be done via text messages or the internet (social media sites) and is usually prejudged against particular groups. It can result in the intimidation of a person through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or on- line.
- Domestic Abuse and Violence – any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviours, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse#domestic-abuse-and-young-people>

<https://safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/>

<http://www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/support-for-women/what-about-my-children/>

• **Drugs** - this could relate to alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances (legal highs) and volatile substances. [Drugs: advice for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/drugs-advice-for-schools)

• **Educational neglect** – This is where a parent's actions could be viewed as neglectful i.e. likely to seriously impair the learning and educational development of the child. This could be perceived as (but not exhaustive to):

1. Lack of engagement in most college or school/ Local Authority/ trust meetings -even where support is offered - that leads to a disengagement of a child in their schooling with a detrimental impact on their learning and development.
2. Lack of engagement with agencies beyond school, for example health services that leads to a delay/ deterioration, that impacts negatively on their child's learning and development.
3. Lack of responsibility to ensure attendance at school and provide valid reasons for absences.

4. At least one court intervention which fails to improve attendance.

- Fabricated or induced illness is a spectrum of presentations rather than a single entity. At one end of the spectrum less severe presentations may include a genuine belief that the child is ill, or exaggeration by carers of the child's existing symptoms. At the other end of the spectrum, the behaviour of carers includes them deliberately inducing symptoms in the child.

There are 3 ways in which the carer of a child will fabricate or induce an illness in a child:-

1. Fabrication of signs and symptoms – fabricating a past medical history;
2. Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsifying hospital charts and records, including letters and documents;
3. Induction of illness by a variety of means.

• **Modern Slavery and National Referral Mechanism**

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance.

[Modern+Slavery+Statutory+Guidance+ EW +and+Non-Statutory+Guidance+ SNI +v3.10.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

• **Operation Encompass**

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate), or they can be contacted via their website.

[Contact us : Operation Encompass](#)

• **Child abduction and community safety incidents**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

- **Faith Abuse** – this includes belief in concepts such as witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil, acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eyes or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children making them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

[Child abuse linked to faith or belief: national action plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief-national-action-plan)

- **Forced Marriage** – a forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. With effect from February 2023, the age for legal marriage has changed from 16 to 18 in the United Kingdom. [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage)

- **Gangs and Youth Violence** – “Street gangs” for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity, although “delinquent peer groups” can also lead to increased antisocial behaviour and youth offending.

Although some group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour, it should not be confused with the serious violence of a gang culture/activity. [Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence)

- **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. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. This can range from a symbolic prick to the vagina to a fairly extensive removal and narrowing of the vagina opening and in the UK all forms are prevalent. It can be known as “female genital cutting” or “female circumcision” and some communities tend to use local names for referring to this practice including “sunna”.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers - Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)

[Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)

Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, “teacher” means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A (1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet.](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674247/FGM_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

• **Private Fostering** – a private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. [Children Act 1989: private fostering - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

• **Gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)** – refers to violence, physical, sexual or otherwise, stalking and harassment and female genital mutilation.

[Violence against women and girls - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

• **Serious Violence** - Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance.

• **Sexting and Sextortion**– Sexting is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet. Young people may also call it cybersex or send a “nude” picture or selfie of themselves partially clothed. Sextortion is where a threat is made to expose the images unless a payment is made.

[UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) • **Teenage Relationship Abuse** – can be emotional, physical, sexual or financial abuse, where teenagers are isolated from their friends, being controlled with what they wear, checking up on them all the time, being forced to have sex, being forced to watch pornography against their will, forcing others to buy them things.

• **Trafficking** – “Trafficking of persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. This could be the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

[Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

• **Mental Health** – good or positive mental health is more than the absence or management of mental health problems; it is the foundation for wellbeing and effective functioning for wellbeing and effective functioning both for individuals and for their communities. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

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 Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

- **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 are abuse (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.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see FGM Section).

- **Breast Ironing** - refers to the practice of massaging or pounding young girls' breasts with heated objects to suppress or reverse the growth of breasts. Breast ironing is often performed by mothers or female relatives of victims misguidedly wishing to protect their young relatives from rape, unwanted sexual advances, early sex, and pregnancies, all of which they fear would result from the appearance that a girl has reached the age of puberty.

- **Preventing Radicalisation** - Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology.

Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media and the internet) and settings (such as the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) making a referral to the PREVENT referral. The school's or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a PREVENT referral.

The PREVENT Duty - All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The PREVENT Duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated Safeguarding Leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the Revised PREVENT Duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

[Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/701212/prevent-duty-guidance-england-and-wales-2023.pdf)

• **Child on Child Abuse (specific policy in place)**

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence, and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting, sextortion and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

The Governing bodies ensure that there are:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse;
- how allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with;
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child on child abuse will be supported;
- a clear statement that abuse is abuse, there is a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”;
- recognition of the gendered nature of child on child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms child on child abuse can take, such as:
 - sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault and sexual harassment.
 - upskirting – The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a persons clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.
 - [Upskirting: know your rights - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/701212/prevent-duty-guidance-england-and-wales-2023.pdf)
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery):
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. 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 victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQIA+ children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Appendix 4 – The Use of Technology

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

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group.

Education Resources that could support schools and colleges include:

- Be Internet Legends developed by Parent Zone and Google is a free internet safety curriculum with PSHE accredited lesson plans and teaching resources for Key Stage 2 pupils
- Disrespect no Body is Home Office advice and includes resources on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography
- Education for a connected world framework from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.
- Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes - this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.
- PSHE association provides guidance to schools on developing their PSHE curriculum
- Teaching online safety in school is departmental guidance outlining how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements
- ThinkUKknow is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age specific resources
- UK Safer Internet Centre developed guidance and resources that can help with the teaching of the online safety component of the Computing Curriculum.

Protecting children

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

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

The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what “appropriate” filtering and monitoring might look like: [UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring](#).

Education settings are directly responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies

Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network. Support for schools is available via the: [schools' buying strategy](#) with specific advice on procurement here: [buying for schools](#).

Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of the online safety picture for schools and colleges to consider, it is only one part. Governors and proprietors should consider a whole school or college approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school or college. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G in particular and the school and college should carefully consider how this is managed on their premises.

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

Reviewing online safety

Technology in this area evolves and changes rapidly. A free online safety self-review tool for schools can be found via the [360 safe](#) website. UKCIS has published [Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions for the governing board](#) to help responsible bodies assure themselves that their online safety arrangements are effective.

Education at home

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the department has provided advice to support schools and colleges do so safely.

The NSPCC and PHSE Association have also provided helpful advice.

Staff training

Governors and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regularly updated safeguarding training and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach. Induction of staff will include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.