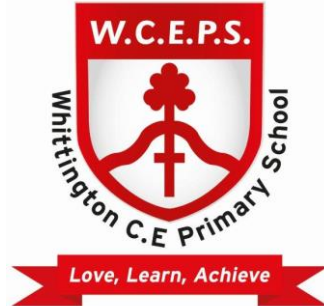


# **Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Policy (Including Child Protection)- adopted by Whittington Church of England Primary School**



**September 2019**

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the governing body and was

Last reviewed on Date: Autumn Term 2019  
Next Review Date: Autumn Term 2020

**Signature..... (Chair of Governors)**

**Print Name: Paul Newell**

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## Model Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2019

<b>Governors' Committee Responsible:</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning Committee</b>
<b>Governor Lead:</b>	<b>Anne Statham</b>
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead of Staff:</b>	<b>Gary Richards</b>
<b>Prevent Lead:</b>	<b>Gary Richards</b>
<b>CSE lead:</b>	<b>Gary Richards</b>
<b>Status &amp; Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Statutory Annual</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>September 28<sup>th</sup> 2020</b>

### Safeguarding Statement

Whittington Church of England Primary School recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

#### Key Personnel:

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#### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Gary Richards**

Contact details:

email: head@whittington.worcs.sch.uk

Telephone: 01905 354844

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#### **The deputy DSL(s) is/are Kelly Leeming**

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#### **The nominated safeguarding governor is David Etheridge**

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#### **The Head Teacher is Gary Richards**

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#### **The Chair of Governors is Paul Newell**

Contact details:

email: antnewell66@gmail.com

Telephone: 07971 677872

## Other named staff and contacts:

- Designated Teacher for Children in Care – Helen Willcox
- Online safety Co-ordinator – Charlotte Burton
- Safeguarding in Education Adviser, WCC – Denise Hannibal – [Dhannibal@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Dhannibal@worcestershire.gov.uk)
- Local Authority Designated Officer/Position of Trust- [LADO@Worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@Worcestershire.gov.uk)  
Family Front Door : **01905 822666** (core working hours)  
Out of hours or at weekends: **01905 768020**

## To submit an online Cause for Concern notification log onto:

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

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20559/refer to childrens social care/1658/are you a professional and worried about child](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20559/refer-to-childrens-social-care/1658/are-you-a-professional-and-worried-about-child)

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Whittington CE Primary School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support pupils in School. The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, health and well-being by creating an honest, open, caring and supportive environment. The pupils' welfare is of paramount importance.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the

police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

West Mercia Consortium inter-agency procedures and the WSCP Levels of Need Guidance.

- Have regard to the DfE statutory guidance 'Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education' (June 2019) by including opportunities in the curriculum, specifically through PSHE and ICT, for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to know who they should turn to for help.

1.2 This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to the school. Child protection is the responsibility of all staff. We ensure that all parents and working partners are aware of this policy by mentioning it in our school prospectus, displaying appropriate information in our reception and on the school website and by raising awareness at meetings with parents/carers.

### 1.3 Extended school activities

Where the Governing Body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body will seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

## 2. Safeguarding Commitment

2.1 The school adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff encourage children and parents/carers to feel free to talk about any concerns and to see school as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.

2.2 Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities (specifically through PHSE/ ICT) which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse (including online) and to know where to get help.
- Ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers and colleagues from other agencies.
- Operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children including identity, right to work, enhanced DBS criminal record and barred list (and overseas where needed), references, and prohibition from teaching or managing in schools (s. 128).
- Within our local area statistics show in July 2018 that antisocial behaviour and shoplifting are the two highest crimes committed and therefore, are particular focus for our school. Data taken from <https://www.crime-statistics.co.uk>

2.3 Safeguarding in the Curriculum – add additional information on how your school threads .....these subjects through your curriculum?

Children are taught about safeguarding in schools. The following areas are among those addressed in PSHE/SRE and in the wider curriculum.

- Bullying/Cyber Bullying  
Child friendly Behaviour Policy/ Be Internet Legends (Google)
- Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Abuse  
Jigsaw Resources
- Online Safety / Mobile technologies  
Be Internet Legends (Google)
- Stranger Danger  
Jigsaw Resources
- Fire and Water Safety  
All pupils learn to swim in KS2
- Peer to Peer Abuse  
Jigsaw Resources

- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment  
Jigsaw Resources
- Road Safety  
Worcestershire Road Safety Team
- Domestic Abuse  
Jigsaw Resources
- Healthy Relationships / Consent  
Jigsaw Resources
- So called Honour Based Violence issues (HBV) e.g. Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)  
Not taught at primary level
- Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSE)  
Jigsaw Resources
- Extremism and Radicalisation (in line with the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014)<sup>1</sup>.  
Assemblies, British Values Workshop.

## 2.4 Support

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and view the world in a positive way. For such children school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components of their lives. Other children may be vulnerable because, for instance, they have a disability, are in care, or are experiencing some form of neglect. Our school seeks to remove any barriers that may exist in being able to recognize abuse or neglect in pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disability. We will seek to provide such children with the necessary support and to build their self-esteem and confidence.

## 2.5 Raising concerns/complaints

We respond robustly when concerns are raised or complaints made (from children, adults including parent/carers) as we recognise that this promotes a safer environment and we seek to learn from complaints and comments. The school will take action and seek to resolve the concerns in a timely way, keeping people informed as to progress wherever possible. The school's complaints procedures are available on the school website: <https://www.whittington.worcs.sch.uk/>

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/380595/SMSC\\_Guidance\\_Maintained\\_Schools.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf)

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 General

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes a responsibility to be alert to possible abuse and to record and report concerns to staff identified with child protection responsibilities within the school (currently called Designated Safeguarding Leads). Staff should be aware that they may need to work with other services as needed and assist in making decisions about individual children.

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including head teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their decisions about individual children.

Every member of staff, including volunteers working with children at our school, is advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned and '*think beyond the obvious*'. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. They take account of the '*one chance rule*' in relation to honour violence based issues, that an adult may have only one opportunity to save a potential victim.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

The names of the Designated Safeguarding Leads for the current year are listed on **page 3** of this document.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's confidential reporting (whistleblowing) policy.

Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, concerns should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Staff will be made aware that if they feel unable to raise a child protection failure internally, they can contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#).

#### 3.2 Governing Body

In accordance with the Statutory Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" September 2018, the Governing Body will ensure that:

- The school has a child protection/safeguarding policy, procedures and training in place which are effective and comply with the law at all times. The policy is made available publicly.
- The policy should be reviewed at least annually or more often, for example in the event of new guidance or a significant incident.



- The school operates safer recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers. Furthermore, the Head Teacher, a nominated Governor and other staff involved in the recruitment process have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers/ people in a position of trust.
- There is a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection (the "Designated Safeguarding Lead") and there is always cover for this role (at least one deputy) with appropriate arrangements for before/after school and out of term activities.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes effective Local authority training (in addition to basic child protection training) and this is refreshed every two years. In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals (at least annually) via safeguarding e-briefings etc.
- The Head Teacher, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children (including early years practitioners within settings on the school site), undertake appropriate training which is regularly updated (at least every year); and that new staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities (including this policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018). Training should include indicators of FGM; early signs of radicalisation and extremism; indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation.(Every 3 years)
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in these arrangements brought to the attention of the Governing Body will be rectified without delay.
- The Chair of Governors (or, in the absence of a Chair, the Vice Chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher, with advice and guidance from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Effective policies and procedures are in place and updated annually including a behaviour "code of conduct" for staff and volunteers -"Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who work with children in education settings October 2015".
- Information is provided to the Local Authority (on behalf of the WSCP) when requested, for example through the Annual Safeguarding Return (e.g. section 175 audit and CSE audit).
- There is an individual member of the Governing Body who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and provide information and reports to the Governing Body.
- The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018 including providing a co-ordinated offer of Early Help for children who require this. This Early Help may be offered directly through school provision or via referral to an external support agency. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WCSP).
- The school complies with all legislative safeguarding duties, including the duty to report suspected or known cases of FGM and the duty to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism. In conjunction with the Head and DSL they should assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk.

### 3.3 Head Teacher

The Head Teacher of the school will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are effectively implemented and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- Allegations of abuse or concerns that a member of staff or adult working at school may pose a risk of harm to a child or young person are notified to the Local Authority Designated Officer in a timely manner.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner. The NSPCC whistle blowing helpline number is also available (0800 028 0285).
- All staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility to pass on safeguarding concerns and that if all else fails to report these directly to Children's Social Care (Children's Services) or the Police.

### 3.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are found in Annex B of "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2018 and include:

- Provision of information to the WSCP/Local Authority on safeguarding and child protection in compliance with section 14B of the Children Act 2004.
- Liaison with the Governing Body and the Local Authority on any deficiencies brought to the attention of the Governing Body and how these should be rectified without delay.
- Management and Referral of cases of suspected abuse to Family Front Door FFD (and/or Police where a crime may have been committed) and Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to presenting risk / harm to a child).
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to inform him / her of issues.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and make use of the Levels of Need guidance when making a decision about whether or not the threshold for Early Help or Social Care intervention is met;
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the school.
- To attend and contribute to child protection conferences and other key partnership risk management meetings when required (Signs of Safety model).
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with educational needs and young carers.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational establishments;
- Ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and staff behaviour and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Ensure that all staff have Part 1 of "Keeping children safe in education".
- Keeping detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Ensure that there are resources and effective training for all staff.
- Keep up to date with new developments in safeguarding by accessing briefings and journals. Attend refresher training every 2 years and face to face CSE training.
- Ensure compliance with relevant procedures and policies, for example in relation to safe record keeping and transfer.

- Carrying out, in conjunction with the Head teacher and Safeguarding Governor, an annual audit of safeguarding procedures, using the County safeguarding checklist or similar.
- Ensure that the school provides appropriate support for staff who may feel distressed when dealing with safeguarding concerns.
- Any returns requested by the LA/WSCP (e.g. s 175/157 audit, CSE audit) are completed in a timely manner to enable the WSCP to meet its statutory duties.

#### **4 Records, Monitoring and Transfer**

- 4.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All staff are clear about the need to record and report concerns about a child or children within the school. The record should include the child's words as far as possible and should be timed, dated and signed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- 4.2 Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect are stored apart from normal pupil or staff records. Normal records sometimes have markers to show that there is sensitive material stored elsewhere. This is to protect individuals from accidental access to sensitive material by those who do not need to know.
- 4.3 Child protection records are stored securely, with access confined to specific staff, e.g. Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Head Teacher.
- 4.4 Child protection records are reviewed regularly to check whether any action or updating is needed. This includes monitoring patterns of complaints or concerns about any individuals (eg child who repeatedly goes missing) and ensuring these are acted upon. Each stand-alone file should have a chronology of significant events.
- 4.5 When children transfer school, their safeguarding records are also transferred. Safeguarding records will be transferred separately from other records and best practice is to pass these directly to a Designated Safeguarding Lead in the receiving education setting, with any necessary discussion or explanation and to obtain a signed and dated record of the transfer. In the event of a child moving out of area and a physical handover not being possible then the most secure method should be found to send the confidential records to a named Designated Safeguarding Lead. Files requested by other agencies e.g. Police, should be copied.
- 4.6 A record of any allegations (proven) made against staff is kept in a confidential file by the Head / Principal.

#### **5. Procedures for Managing Concerns**

- 5.1 Our school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Safeguarding Worcestershire <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/>
- 5.2 Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the [West Mercia Consortium inter-agency procedures](#) and the [WSCP Levels of Need Guidance](#).
- 5.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the deputy designated lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

- 5.3 All concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay and recorded in writing using the agreed template (see Appendix 1 for pro-forma or *insert your own form here*).
- 5.4 The DSL will consider what action to take and have appropriate discussions with parents/carers prior to referral to children's social care or another agency unless, to do so would place the child at risk of harm or compromise an investigation
- 5.5 All referrals will be made in line with local procedures as detailed on the Worcestershire website.
- 5.6 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Children's Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Head teacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.
- 5.7 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police if:
- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy and the Head teacher are all unavailable;
  - they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.
- 5.8 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Head teacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point they should contact Children's Services directly with their concerns.

#### 5.9 Peer on peer abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment)

We recognise that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and the same safeguarding children procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to peer on peer abuse, must not pass it off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

We will ensure, through training, that staff, volunteers and governors will have an understanding of the range of peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and will be made aware of how to recognise and manage such issues. Staff will be given the skills to identify and manage harmful sexual behaviour using resources such as the Brook Traffic Light Tool. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk, for example girls, children with SEND and LGBT children.

Staff should be aware that such incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and can occur between children outside the school. Staff, and particularly the DSL, should always consider the context in which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Where the abuse is physical, verbal, bullying or cyber-bullying, recording of such incidents and sanctions will be applied in line with our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. Where a child discloses safeguarding allegations of a sexual nature against another pupil in the same setting, the DSL should refer to the West Midlands Safeguarding Children procedures website (section 3.3) and seek advice from the Family Front Door or Community Social Worker before

commencing its own investigation or contacting parents. This may mean, on occasions, that the school is unable to conduct its own investigation into such incidents. All such incidents will be recorded using our child protection recording forms.

Reports of incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be responded to in line with Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and the DfE guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'.

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

Support for the victims of abuse will be in line with support outlined in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. For victims of sexual abuse, the school should follow advice given by Children's Social Care and consider using external agencies, such as Early Help or West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre to support any strategies that they may be able to provide within school.

Depending on the nature of abuse, the school may need to consider providing measures to protect and support the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other pupils and/or staff in the school by means of a risk assessment. The risk assessment should be recorded and kept under review.

We recognise that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and the same safeguarding children procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to peer on peer abuse, must not pass it off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. We will ensure, through training, that staff, volunteers and governors will have an understanding of the range of peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and will be made aware of how to recognise and manage such issues. Staff will be given the skills to identify and manage harmful sexual behaviour using resources such as the Brook Traffic Light Tool. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk, for example girls, children with SEND and LGBT children.

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Where the abuse is physical, verbal, bullying or cyber-bullying, recording of such incidents and sanctions will be applied in line with our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. Where a child discloses safeguarding allegations of a sexual nature against another pupil in the same setting, the DSL should refer to the West Midlands Safeguarding Children procedures website (section 3.3 <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/5cjN/contact-details/?b=Worcestershire>) and seek advice from the Family Front Door or Community Social Worker before commencing its own investigation or contacting parents. This may mean, on occasions, that the school is unable to conduct its own investigation into such incidents. All such incidents will be recorded using our child protection recording forms. Reports of incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be responded to in line with Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and the DfE guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'.

Support for the victims of abuse will be in line with support outlined in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. For victims of sexual abuse, the school should follow advice given by Children's Social Care and consider using external agencies, such as Early Help or West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre to support any strategies that they may be able to provide within school.

Depending on the nature of abuse, the school may need to consider providing measures to protect and support the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other pupils and/or staff in the school by means of a risk assessment. The risk assessment should be recorded and kept under review.

#### 5.10 Children with additional vulnerabilities

There are many children who have additional needs or whose living arrangements may mean that they are more vulnerable to harm, for example children with special educational needs, disabled children, children in public care or privately fostered children. It is essential that the school knows who shares parental responsibility for children and has effective relationships with partner agencies in relation to these children (for example, Virtual School for Children in Care).

The school will ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge and guidance so that they are aware of the additional challenges faced by these children and the impact of their additional vulnerabilities. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a child's disability without further exploration; no single point of contact for the school as a child has a number of care-givers and involved professionals; assumptions that state approved care-givers are providing safe care for the child; communication needs of a child which can lead to over reliance on parental accounts and interpretations.

#### 5.11 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation. It is sexual abuse involving criminal behaviours against children and young people which can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people. Victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. It may also be linked to child trafficking. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

The DSL will use the Worcester Safeguarding Children's Board CSE Screening Tool<sup>2</sup> on all occasions when there is a concern that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually exploited or where indicators have been observed that are consistent with a child who is being or who is at risk of being sexually exploited.

In all cases if the tool identifies any level of concern the DSL should contact their local Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation Forum and email the completed CSE Screening Tool along with a **Family Front Door (FFD)** Cause for Concern form. If a child is in immediate danger the police should be called on 999.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20054/safeguarding\\_children/273/child\\_sexual\\_exploitation\\_pathway](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20054/safeguarding_children/273/child_sexual_exploitation_pathway)

## 5.12 Criminal Exploitation – County Lines

### **What is County Lines?**

County Lines is a very serious issue where criminal gangs set up a drug dealing operation in a place outside their usual operating area. Gangs will move their drug dealing from big cities (e.g. London, Manchester, Liverpool etc.) to smaller towns and rural areas in order to make more money. This can have a really big effect on the community who live there and bring with it serious criminal behaviour.

The UK Government defines county lines as:

*County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.*

**Child criminal exploitation** is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as:

*Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.*

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes, for instance, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

### *Crimes Associated with County Lines*

#### *Drugs*

County lines commonly involves the illegal distribution and dealing of seriously dangerous drugs from one city/town to another. The most common drugs involved are heroin and cocaine (crack and powder), but also MDMA, cannabis, amphetamines and spice.

#### *Violence*

Gangs sometimes use violence to threaten children and young people when recruiting them. Gangs also violently assault children and young people working for them if they find their drugs or money to be missing. Weapons such as firearms, knives, bats, acid are sometimes used to make violent threats.

#### *Exploitation*

Gangs recruit and use children and young people to move drugs and money for them. Children as young as 11 years old are recruited, often using social media. They are exploited and forced to carry drugs between locations, usually on trains or coaches. They are also forced to sell drugs to local users.

#### *Sexual Exploitation*

Young girls are often groomed and forced into relationships with gang members and are made to perform sexual acts.

#### *Signs to look out for*

A young person's involvement in county lines activity often leaves signs. A person might exhibit some of these signs, either as a member or as an associate of a gang dealing drugs.

- Are they always going missing from school or their home?
- Are they travelling alone to places far away from home?
- Do they suddenly have lots of money/lots of new clothes/new mobile phones?
- Are they receiving much more calls or texts than usual?
- Are they carrying or selling drugs?
- Are they carrying weapons or know people that have access to weapons?
- Are they in a relationship with or hanging out with someone/people that are older and controlling?
- Do they have unexplained injuries?
- Do they seem very reserved or seem like they have something to hide?
- Do they seem scared?
- Are they self-harming?

### *Terms associated with County Lines*

Here are some words/terms that are commonly used when describing county lines activity. someone using these words might be involved in or might know of County Lines activity.

#### *Cuckooing*

Cuckooing is when drug gangs take over the home of a vulnerable person through violence and intimidation, using it as their base for selling/manufacturing drugs.

Signs of cuckooing:

- An increase in people coming and going
- An increase in cars or bikes outside
- Litter outside
- Signs of drugs use
- You haven't seen the person who lives there recently or when you have, they have been anxious or distracted.

#### *Going Country*

This is the most popular term that describes County Lines activity. It can also mean the act of travelling to another city/town to deliver drugs or money.

#### *Trapping*

The act of selling drugs. Trapping can refer to the act of moving drugs from one town to another or the act of selling drugs in one.

#### *Trap House*

A building used as a base from where drugs are sold (or sometimes manufactured). These houses usually are occupied by someone (usually adult drug users) but sometimes young people are forced to stay in trap houses.

#### *Trap line*

This refers to when someone owns a mobile phone specifically for the purpose of running and selling of drugs.

### **What to do if you have concerns a young person is involved in County Lines**

Follow your normal safeguarding procedures and refer to your school's DSL. The DSL will refer on to Children's Social Care and/or the Police, if the young person is at immediate risk of harm.



Further information is available in the regional guidance of the [West Midlands Child Protection Procedures](http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk).<sup>3</sup>

Further guidance is available in the Home Office's publication '[County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/county-lines-criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults)'.<sup>4</sup>

### 5.13. Radicalisation and Extremism

The Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2015) under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Extremism is defined as 'as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised; adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous.

Whittington CE Primary School is clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follows the Department for Education guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism<sup>5</sup>.

Whittington CE Primary School seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent then Worcester Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

### 5.14 Honour-based Violence

Honour based violence (HBV) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may constitute domestic and/or sexual abuse.

Honour based violence might be committed against people who

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion;
- want to get out of an arranged marriage;
- want to get out of a forced marriage;
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture

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<sup>3</sup> <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpzs/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-affected-by-gang-activity-and-youth-violence>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/county-lines-criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

## 5.15 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police<sup>6</sup>.

The duty applies to all persons in Whittington CE Primary School who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, however the DSL should be informed.

If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101. The report should be made by the close of the next working day.

Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per Whittington Ce Primary School's child protection procedures. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

### **What is breast ironing?**

Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa.

### **Why does breast ironing happen?**

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child-like' for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls' breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

### **Breast ironing is physical abuse**

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

Breast ironing does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the 'ironing' can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer.

### **Breast Ironing in the UK**

Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as 1000 girls at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) mentions breast ironing on page 80, as part of the section on so-called 'honour-based' violence. Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their school should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Schools need to know the risk level within their communities and tackle the risk as appropriate.

### **What should schools do?**

Where schools have a concern about a child, they should contact Children's Social Care Services. If the concerns are based on more concrete indicators – i.e., the young person says this is going to happen to them, or disclosure that it has happened to them or to an older sister – schools should make a child protection referral and inform the Police as required by the mandatory reporting duty. Schools should not:

- Contact the parents before seeking advice from children's social care;
- Make any attempt to mediate between the child/young person and parents.

It is important to keep in mind that the parents may not see FGM or Breast Ironing as a form of abuse; however, they may be under a great deal of pressure from their community and or family to subject their daughters to it. Some parents from identified communities may seek advice and support as to how to resist and prevent FGM for their daughters, and education about the harmful effects of FGM and Breast Ironing may help to make parents feel stronger in resisting the pressure of others in the community. Remember that religious teaching does not support FGM or Breast Ironing.

### **The 'one chance' rule**

In the same way that we talk about the 'one chance rule' in respect of young people coming forward with fears that they may be forced into marriage, young people disclosing fears that they are going to be sent abroad for FGM are taking the 'one chance', of seeking help. It is essential that we take such concerns seriously and act without delay. Never underestimate the determination of parents who have decided that it is right for their daughter to undergo FGM. Attempts to mediate may place the child/young person at greater risk, and the family may feel so threatened at the news of their child's disclosure that they bring forward their plans or take action to silence her.

## **5.16 Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. Since June 2014 forcing

someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as a pre-introduced or arranged marriage which is common in several cultures, whereby the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with Family Front Door.

For further guidance, read '[Forced Marriage](#)' and '[Worcestershire's Forced Marriage, Honour-Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation Protocol – January 2016](#)'

### 5.17 Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation or could be linked to trafficking.

The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities'<sup>7</sup>. Staff are made aware of these procedures at induction and through our Attendance policy (insert relevant school policy here).

Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage and the particular vulnerabilities of looked after children who go missing.

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20595/behaviour\\_and\\_attendance/293/children\\_missing\\_education](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20595/behaviour_and_attendance/293/children_missing_education)

### 5.18 Domestic Abuse

We recognise that exposures 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 with n their personal relationships as well as in the context of their home.

#### **Operation Encompass**

Operation Encompass is to highlight that a Domestic Abuse Incident has taken place and the police have been called or visited the family home. It is about keeping an eye on changed behaviour and logging anything out of the ordinary. Our school receives Operation Encompass notifications via WCC Children's Portal daily from West Mercia Police. All parents have received or will receive a letter informing them on how we use Operation Encompass notifications. (*See more in Appendix 3*)

We will ensure that our pupils are educated to ensure they understand what a healthy relationship looks like, for example by using the:

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

WSCP Healthy Relationships- a whole school approach and resources from WCC Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence website-see links below:

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/7222/wscb\\_healthy\\_relationships\\_a\\_whole\\_school\\_approach](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/7222/wscb_healthy_relationships_a_whole_school_approach)  
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/domesticabuse>

## 5.19 Online Safety/Sexting

There is a separate policy in relation to online safety and the school have a robust approach to promoting safety through the curriculum. (*Policy title here*) The practice of children sharing images and videos via text message, email, social media or mobile messaging apps has become commonplace. However, this online technology has also given children the opportunity to produce and distribute sexual imagery in the form of photos and videos. (sexting) Such imagery involving anyone under the age of 18 is illegal.

Youth produced sexual imagery refers to both images and videos where

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

All incidents of this nature should be treated as a safeguarding concern and in line with the UKCCIS guidance 'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people'<sup>8</sup>.

Cases where sexual imagery of people under 18 has been shared by adults and where sexual imagery of a person of any age has been shared by an adult to a child is child sexual abuse and should be responded to accordingly.

If a member of staff becomes aware of an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery they should follow the child protection procedures and refer to the DSL as soon as possible. The member of staff should confiscate the device involved and set it to flight mode or, if this is not possible, turn it off. Staff should not view, copy or print the youth produced sexual imagery.

The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff and subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate). Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm.

Immediate referral at the initial review stage should be made to Family Front Door/Police if

- the incident involves an adult;
- There is good reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special education needs);
- What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the child's development stage or are violent;
- The imagery involves sexual acts;
- The imagery involves anyone aged 12 or under;

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<sup>8</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/545997/Sexting\\_in\\_schools\\_and\\_colleges\\_UKCIS\\_\\_4\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/545997/Sexting_in_schools_and_colleges_UKCIS__4_.pdf)

- There is reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example the child is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

If these factors are not present, then the DSL will use their professional judgement to assess the risk to pupils involved and may decide, with input from the Headteacher, to respond to the incident without escalation to Family Front Door or the police.

In applying judgement as to management within school or referral in line with child protection procedures, the following factors may be relevant.

- there is a significant age difference between the sender/receiver;
- there is any coercion or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver;
- the imagery was shared and received with the knowledge of the child in the imagery;
- the child is more vulnerable than usual i.e. at risk;
- there is a significant impact on the children involved;
- the image is of a severe or extreme nature;
- capacity of child and understanding of consent;
- the situation is isolated or if the image been more widely distributed;
- there other circumstances relating to either the sender or recipient that may add cause for concern i.e. difficult home circumstances;
- there are previous similar incidents.

## 5.20 Allegations against staff

All staff should be mindful of the position of trust that they are in when working within an education setting. They need to comply with guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones.

Pupils' allegations or concerns about staff conduct will be taken seriously and followed up in a transparent and timely way.

If an allegation is made which meets the criteria as identified in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher, unless the allegation concerns the Headteacher, in which case the Chair of Governors will be informed immediately. Where the Headteacher is the sole proprietor, the allegation will be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with LADO, prior to undertaking any investigation.

The school will follow the DfE and West Mercia procedures LA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is available in school.

The Head teacher (or Chair of Governors) will be guided by the LADO and an HR consultant when considering suspension or other neutral protective steps.

Publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law; this includes verbal conversations or written material including content placed on social media sites.

## 5.21 Managing Professional Disagreements

On occasions there will be disagreements between professionals as to how concerns are handled and these can impact on effective working relationships. The school will support staff to promote positive partnerships within school and with other agencies and will ensure that

**staff** are aware of how to escalate concerns and disagreements if appropriate and use the WSCP escalation procedures<sup>7</sup> if necessary.

<sup>7</sup><http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4gjN/escalation-policy-resolution-of-professional-disagreements>

## 5.22 The use of 'reasonable force' in schools and colleges

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

- Departmental advice for schools is available

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

- Advice for colleges is available on the AOC website. <https://www.aoc.co.uk/>

## 5.23 Modern Slavery

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a new statutory duty on public authorities, including schools, to notify the National Crime Agency (NCA) (section 52 of the Act) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to modern slavery. The public authority (including schools) bears this obligation where it has 'reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking'. Staff need to be aware of this duty and inform the DSL should they suspect or receive information that either parents or their children may be victims of modern slavery. The DSL will then contact the NCA.

## 5.24 Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Services as soon as possible. If we become aware of a privately fostering arrangement, we will check that Children's Services have been informed.

## 5.25 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. 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, and in accordance with local procedures, 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: Homeless Reduction Act 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 on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation:

### *Other Relevant Policies*

The Governing Body's statutory responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond compliance with child protection procedures. The safeguarding duty is relevant for the discharge of all functions and activities. This policy needs to be considered in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Management
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Racist Incidents
- Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying)
- Physical Interventions/Restraint (DfE Guidance "Use of Reasonable Force" and "Screening, Searching and Confiscation")
- Special Educational Needs
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy
- Trips and Visits
- Work Experience and Extended Work Placements
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Relationships
- Education
- Site Security
- Complaints Procedure
- Safe and Appropriate Use of Images



- Equal Opportunities
- Toileting/Intimate Care
- Online Safety
- Extended School Activities
- Supporting Pupils/Students with Medical Conditions
- Looked After Children
- Private Fostering
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation
- Whistleblowing

## APPENDIX 1

### Logging a Concern about a Child's Safety and Welfare – all staff and visitors

Pupil's name:		DOB:	Year:
Date:		Time:	
Name: .....		.....	
Print		Signature	
Position:			
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.			
Details of concern/incident - record the who/what/where/when factually (use reverse or continuation sheet if necessary):			
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)			
Action taken			
Reporting staff signature .....		Date	
.....			
DSL – Response/Outcome			
DSL signature .....		Date	
.....			

Check to make sure your report is clear now - and will also be clear to a stranger reading it next

## APPENDIX 2

### Safer Recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below. The SCR will be monitored and checked by the DSL/HT/Safeguarding Governor on a regular basis, throughout the academic year: Example half termly

#### Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (**section 128**) direction made by the secretary of state
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.
- Staff and volunteers who provide early years or later years childcare and any managers of such childcare are covered by the disqualification regulations of the Childcare Act 2006 and are required to declare relevant information - see statutory guidance: Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018).

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

#### Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could be significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

### **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

### **Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

### **Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

### **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity

### **Governance**

- All members of the governance will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information and section 128 check. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity

## APPENDIX 3

### Effects of domestic abuse on children and young people

**The impact of domestic abuse on the quality of a child's or young person's life is very significant. Children and young people who live with domestic abuse are at increased risk of behavioural problems, emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life.**

The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people can be wide-ranging and may include effects in any or all of the following areas:

**Physical:** Children and young people can be hurt either by trying to intervene and stopping the violence or by being injured themselves by the abuser. They may develop self-harming behaviour or eating disorders. Their health could be affected, as they may not be being cared for appropriately. They may have suicidal thoughts or try to escape or blank out the abuse by using drugs, alcohol or by running away.

**Sexual:** There is a high risk that children and young people will be abused themselves where there is domestic abuse. In homes where living in fear is the norm, and situations are not discussed, an atmosphere of secrecy develops, and this creates a climate in which sexual abuse could occur. In addition to this, children and young people may sometimes be forced to watch the sexual abuse of their mother/carer. This can have long-lasting effects on the sexual and emotional development of the child/young person.

**Economic:** The parent or carer of the child or young person may have limited control over the family finances. Therefore, there might be little or no money available for extra-curricular activities, clothing or even food, impacting on their health and development.

**Emotional:** Children and young people will often be very confused about their feelings – for example, loving both parents/carers but not wanting the abuse to continue. They may be given negative messages about their own worth, which may lead to them developing low self-esteem. Many children and young people feel guilty, believing that the abuse is their fault. They are often pessimistic about their basic needs being met and can develop suicidal thoughts. Some children and young people may internalise feelings and appear passive and withdrawn or externalise their feelings in a disruptive manner.

**Isolation:** Children and young people may become withdrawn and isolated; they may not be allowed out to play; and if there is abuse in the home, they are less likely to invite their friends round. Schooling may be disrupted in many ways, and this may contribute to their growing isolation. They may frequently be absent from school as they may be too scared to leave their mother alone. They may have to move away from existing friends and family – e.g. into a refuge or other safe or temporary accommodation.

**Threats:** Children and young people are likely to have heard threats to harm their mother/father. They may have been directly threatened with harm or heard threats to harm their pet. They also live under the constant and unpredictable threat of violence, resulting in feelings of intimidation, fear and vulnerability, which can lead to high anxiety, tension, confusion and stress.

This clearly highlights that living with domestic abuse has a significant impact on a child's ability to achieve the five outcomes as outlined in the *Every Child Matters* agenda:

- be healthy;
- stay safe;
- enjoy and achieve;
- make a positive contribution;
- achieve economic well-being.

## What you might see in school

- Unexplained absences or lateness – either from staying at home to protect their parent or hide their injuries, or because they are prevented from attending school;
- Children and young people attending school when ill rather than staying at home;
- Children and young people not completing their homework, or making constant excuses, because of what is happening at home;
- Children and young people who are constantly tired, on edge and unable to concentrate through disturbed sleep or worrying about what is happening at home;
- Children and young people displaying difficulties in their cognitive and school performance;
- Children and young people whose behaviour and personality changes dramatically;
- Children and young people who become quiet and withdrawn and have difficulty in developing positive peer relations;
- Children and young people displaying disruptive behaviour or acting out violent thoughts with little empathy for victims;
- Children and young people who are no trouble at all.

This list is not exhaustive – this is intended to give you an idea of some of the types of behaviour that could be presented.

## What schools can do

**Schools can create an environment which both promotes their belief and commitment that domestic abuse is not acceptable, and that they are willing to discuss and challenge it.**

For many victims, the school might be the one place that they visit without their abusive partner.

It would help if schools displayed posters or had cards/pens available with information about domestic abuse and contact details for useful agencies: for example, NSPCC **0800 800 5000** and ChildLine **0800 11 11**; Parentline **0800 800 2222**; Worcestershire's Forum Against Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (WFADSA) [website](#) and West Mercia Women's Aid 24 hr. helpline: **0800 980 3331**.

West Mercia Constabulary - Police Domestic Abuse Units 101.

Research shows that the repeated use of physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse is one of the ways in which male power is used to control women. The underlying attitudes which legitimate and perpetuate violence against women should be challenged by schools as part of the whole school ethos.

### **Schools can support individual children and young people by:**

- Introducing a **whole-school philosophy** that domestic abuse is unacceptable;
- **Responding to disclosures** and potential child protection concerns; recognising that domestic abuse and forced marriage may be a child protection concern; policies and procedures must include domestic abuse;
- **Giving emotional support** – the child or young person might need referral to a more specialist service or need additional support to complete coursework, exams etc.;
- **Facilitating a peer support network** – children and young people can become isolated but often welcome talking to friends about their problems;
- **Offering practical support** – if children or young people are new to the school, they may not yet have a uniform, they may also need financial help with extra-curricular activities, or they may be unfamiliar with the syllabus, the area, where to hang out, etc.;
- **Providing somewhere safe and quiet** to do their homework or just to sit and think;
- **Improving the self-esteem and confidence** of children and young people by:
  - offering them opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities;
  - offering tasks which are achievable and giving praise and encouragement;
  - monitoring their behaviour and setting clear limits;
  - criticising the action, not the person;
  - helping them to feel a sense of control in their school lives;

- involving them in decision making;
- helping them to be more assertive;
- respecting them as individuals;
- encouraging involvement in extra-curricular activities.

### **From The Expect Respect Education Toolkit – Women’s Aid**

#### **Operation Encompass**

Operation Encompass is to highlight that a Domestic Abuse Incident has taken place and the police have been called or visited the family home. It is about keeping an eye on changed behaviour and logging anything out of the ordinary. Our school receives Operation Encompass notifications via WCC Children’s Portal daily from West Mercia Police. All parents have received or will receive a letter informing them on how we use Operation Encompass notifications.

#### **The DSL’s responsibility – the DSL should:**

- The link to the children’s portal is:  
[https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/Chs\\_Portal/HomePage.aspx](https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/Chs_Portal/HomePage.aspx)
- View the Operation Encompass website ([www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org)) for further information;
- Ensure the Safeguarding Education Adviser has up to date contact information;
- Ensure the Operation Encompass referral record document is retained in the same way as other child protection documents, in a secure place;
- Identify and brief a colleague who can deputise in his/her absence;
- Ensure that all teaching staff are aware of Operation Encompass and understand the confidential nature of any information passed to them and that this information must be treated in the same way as any other child protection information;
- Inform parents that the school is part of Operation Encompass (using the template letter supplied);
- Inform the Governing Body that the school is part of Operation Encompass and the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding should have a working knowledge of the principles;
- Include details of Operation Encompass in the school prospectus and on the school website to ensure that all new parents are informed of the school’s involvement.
- Consider displaying Operation Encompass posters around the school.

#### **On receiving a Domestic Abuse notification, the DSL should:**

- complete the Operation Encompass referral record
- notify class teachers or year leaders
- If there's no change to the child’s behaviour - just monitor and log the DA
- If the child displays poor behaviour choices /seems upset/withdrawn, offer the relevant support needed

#### **Bear in mind**

- Victim of incident may be anxious that the information will be shared inappropriately.
- Notification may not give details as to which parent is the perpetrator/victim – any disclosure to the ‘wrong’ parent could heighten risk.
- Need to be aware who is ‘connected’ to the child – e.g. TA/lunchtime supervisor may be child’s relative / friend of the family.
- **Inappropriate sharing of information could heighten the risk for the victim and/or the child.**

**If in doubt, consult with the Family Front Door (01905 822666)**