

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Excelsior Academy



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## Useful contact details

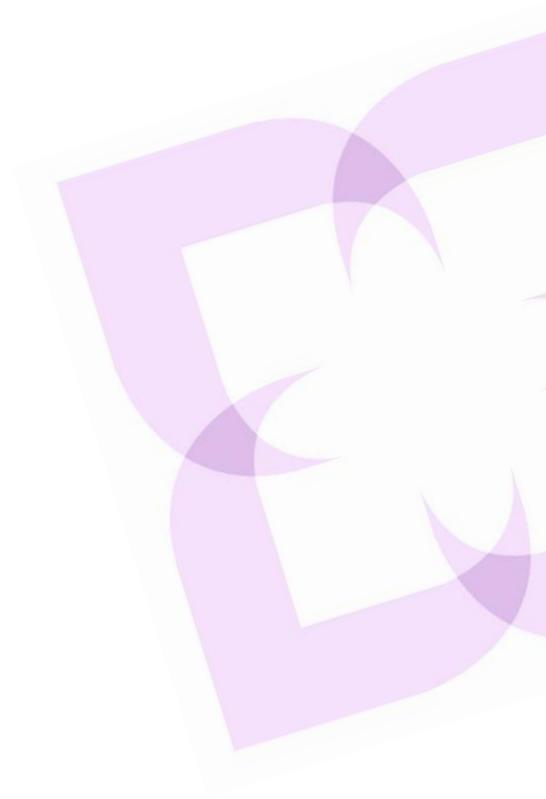
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Designated Officer

Melanie Scott

0191 211 6730



## **Contents Page**

1. Purpose and aim
2. Introduction
3. Framework and legislation
4. Roles and responsibilities for all staff
5. The designated safeguarding lead
6. Role of the designated safeguarding lead
7. Responsibilities of Excelsior Academy governing body/trust board
8. Information for parents
9. Procedures
10. Safe school/safe staff
11. Whistle blowing/confidentiality reporting
12. Complaints/allegation management towards or with a child or adult.
13. Training and support
14. Professional confidentiality
15. Records and monitoring
16. Attendance at safeguarding conferences
17. Supporting children (a)
18. Peer on peer abuse policy
19. Supporting children (b)
20. Links to other Excelsior Academy/trust policies
21. Legislation/national and local guidance
22. Review/ratification
23. Section 2 – signs of abuse in children

## Purpose and aim

Excelsior Academy whole-school child protection policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child welfare concerns. The policy also aims to make explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe in our school.

The purpose of the policy is, to ensure that our children's welfare is of paramount importance, early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and where child protection concerns are identified referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's well-being.

Governors and staff are committed within Excelsior Academy to keep children safe by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in our care through all of our policies, procedures and practices. We expect all our pupils, parents/carers and visitors to share this commitment and understanding. This policy applies to Excelsior Academy's whole workforce. This policy should be read by all staff working and volunteering in Excelsior Academy.

## Introduction

Excelsior Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the pupils in its care. There are four main elements to Excelsior Academy child protection policy:

1. **Prevention** - positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models, the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and recognising and reducing risks to children including harassment, bullying, victimisation, exploitation, radicalisation and issues such as Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.
2. **Protection** - following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training and updates at least annually and are supported to refer their concerns to the designated safeguarding lead, Karolyn Thompson, deputy designated safeguarding lead or the Initial Response Service (IRS 0191 277 2500) IF NECESSARY. In certain specific cases such as Female Genital Mutilation (Mandatory reporting of FGM from October 2015), Radicalisation or Forced Marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted.
3. **Reconsideration** - following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child's circumstances.

4. **Support** - to pupils and school staff and to children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances.

All staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect and peer on peer abuse in its many forms. Additional guidance on how our school supports the following areas of need, additional need or harm are either hyperlinked to the areas identified below from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 or in a named school policy, these must be read in conjunction with our child protection policy:

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Children missing from education (Keeping Children Safe 2016 Annex A)
- Children missing home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation CSE (Keeping Children Safe 2016 Annex A)
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation FGM (Keeping Children Safe 2016 Annex A)
- Forced Marriage (Keeping Children Safe 2016 Annex A)
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender Based Violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental health
- Missing children and adult strategy
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation and extremism (Keeping Children Safe 2016 Annex A)
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting new guidance from DFE
- Trafficking
- Peer on peer abuse

THESE HYPERLINKS SHOULD BE ACCESSED IN SPECIFIC CASES OF VULNERABILITY IN EACH OF THESE AREAS.

In the event of any of these issues being recognised information should be shared directly with the designated safeguarding leads which will result in the situation being recorded, evaluated and support offered in school or the pupil/s being referred to specific services.

## **Framework and legislation**

No academy operates in isolation. Keeping Children Safe from Significant Harm is the responsibility of all adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with children and families across the City.

Excelsior Academy is committed to keeping children safe and safeguarding all children in accordance with child protection: Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board procedures [www.nscb.org.uk](http://www.nscb.org.uk) and partner agencies in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm.

Significant harm is defined in The Children's Act 1989 as the ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and physical abuse) or the impairment of health (physical or mental) or development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural) as compared to a similar child.

**Note:** harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002).

Local authorities have a duty to investigate (under S47 of the Children Act 1989). Where a local authority is informed that there is a child who is living, or is found, in their area and they have reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm they must make such enquiries as necessary to promote or safeguard the child's welfare. Children's Social Care through the Initial Response Service undertakes this responsibility on behalf of the local authority once a referral has been made.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 contains information on what schools and colleges **should** do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges **must** comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 which applies to all the schools, including maintained nursery schools. The Children Act 1989 sets out the Legal Framework.

## **Roles and responsibilities for all staff**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting ALL children from all forms of maltreatment and abuse (including in addition to the four categories of harm, issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Honour Based Violence (HBV) inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage (FM), preventing radicalisation and extremism, harassment, bullying and victimisation) preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. This includes everyone under the age of 18.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Due to the regular contact with children all staff at Excelsior Academy have, we hold a particularly important role in safeguarding as we are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and to prevent concerns from escalating. Children can make disclosures or show signs of abuse at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools. Therefore it is important that ALL staff:

- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child.
- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of harm to any child to the designated safeguarding lead immediately. (However, ALL staff can refer their concerns directly to Initial Response Service if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above). They should inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible if they have reported concerns directly.
- Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the designated safeguarding lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the designated safeguarding lead with other agencies. All discussions, decisions and reasons for them should be recorded in writing adhering to Excelsior Academy recording and information sharing policy/procedure.
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child(ren), adult/staff member in school directly to the designated safeguarding lead/Executive Principal.
- Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices of staff and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime through whistleblowing procedures and the staff behaviour/code of conduct policy.
- Ensure that they attend regular formal training/updates at least annually to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child.
- Ensure from the 1st July 2015 for schools that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, April 2015 that the school has due regard to 'Prevent' and to assess risk of children and young people being radicalised drawn into extremism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols in place for all visitors so that views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others).
- Ensure from 31st October 2015 that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.
- Ensure that staff understand through online safety training the additional risks for pupils online and continue to promote the school's online safety policy in the protection of all pupils. This includes the management of 3G and 4G internet access via children's own mobile phones or electronic devices which can allow them unlimited access to the internet without any restrictions using their own data allowance. It should be clear in every school's online safety policy, the expectations of pupils regarding their own devices whilst on school

site and the consequences of any evidence of inappropriate use of the internet.

- Ensure that they remain vigilant whilst visitors are on site and continue to promote the school's commitment to keeping children safe through reminding visitors and parents/carers of the school's appropriate use of personal mobile phones/devices whilst they are on school premises. This includes staff understanding and adhering to the staff behaviour policy inclusive of use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

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

### **The designated safeguarding lead**

Excelsior Academy has appointed a senior member of staff Karolyn Thompson to be our designated safeguarding lead. This person has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and has the appropriate authority and training to undertake such a role and is able to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. This person is able to take part in strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and to support other trained staff to do so as well as contribute to the assessment of children.

### **Role of the designated safeguarding lead**

At Excelsior Academy we have appointed the following deputy designated leads, Deborah Nelson, Julie Smith, Elaine Rose, Donna Harrison and Kirsty Rutherford who are part of the safeguarding team. These individuals are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies the ultimate LEAD responsibility for child protection will not be delegated and remains with the designated safeguarding lead.

The designated safeguarding lead has a very detailed role (see below)

However, if there is an IMMEDIATE safeguarding concern and the designated safeguarding leads are unavailable please seek immediate support via the Initial Response Service (0191 277 2500).

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding leads are identified here:

#### **Managing referrals**

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to Initial Response Service.
- Refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child(ren); and/or

- Refer to the police cases where a crime may have been committed including Sexual Exploitation (MSET lead), Radicalisation (through the Single Point of Contact for the Channel Panel) Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.
- Support staff who make referrals to Initial Response Service, Channel Panel or Police as appropriate.

### **Work with others**

- Liaise with the Executive Principal to inform him of issues especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- As required liaise with the case manager (Executive Principal) or where the Executive Principal is the subject of allegations the chair of governors and the designated officer Melanie Scott Tel: 0191 211 6730 through Children's Social Care for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member).
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

### **Undertake training**

The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should receive appropriate training updated every two years. They should undertake prevent awareness and in addition to the formal training their knowledge and skills should be refreshed at regular intervals but at least annually so they:

- Understand and keep up with any developments to their role.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.

- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the PREVENT duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

### **Raising awareness**

The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the school's policies are known, understood and used appropriately:

- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors and the workforce in this regard to ensure its effectiveness. This includes ensuring that all staff receive the policy on their induction.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents/carers are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Link with the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

### **Child protection file**

- Where children leave the school ensure their child protection file is transferred appropriately for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file. Ensuring safe transit and receipt. This may be through an electronic system.

### **Availability**

- During term time the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available during school hours for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead or deputies would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to consider whether in

exceptional circumstances availability via phone and/or Skype or other such mediums is acceptable.

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

Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016: Annex B.

In addition we recommend as best practice that the designated safeguarding lead's:

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the schools suite of safeguarding policies particularly the child protection policy and the staff behaviour policy, especially new or part time staff who may work with different establishments.
- Be aware of all school excursions and residentials and clarify with educational visit coordinator/group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding/child protection.
- Ensure a whole school policy about managing behaviour and discipline including the use of reasonable force, is in place.
- Ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber bullying inclusive of messages to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils is in place.
- Inform local authority of any pupil to be deleted from school admission register and follow the missing from education protocols.
- Inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without schools permission for a continuous period of 3 days or more.

## **Responsibilities of Excelsior Academy's governing body/trust board**

Best practice would advise that a safeguarding governor at senior board level is appointed to support the designated safeguarding lead in their role.

At Excelsior Academy the senior level governor/board member for safeguarding is Dr Mohammed Farsi.

The role of the individual is to:

- Ensure that the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding and child protection activity and challenge the safeguarding activity.

- Ensure the self-assessment tool and designated safeguarding lead report demonstrates fully and accurately the safeguarding arrangements and any action to progress areas of weakness or development.
- Ensure that governing bodies receive training to clarify their statutory role in keeping children safe to support their quality assurance of those statutory arrangements.

If the safeguarding governor is NOT the chair of governors it is important to indicate the role of the chair in safeguarding, which is to:

- Ensure that they liaise with Children's Social Care and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Executive Principal.
- Ensure that in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Executive Principal, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer (DO). Therefore ensuring effective whistleblowing procedures are in place.
- Ensure that the appointed member of the governing body for safeguarding holds the Executive Principal to account on all matters involving safeguarding through an effective child protection policy that is embedded and followed by all the workforce in all of the above raised areas.
- Ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding training at induction and that they receive regular updates.
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place for online content (inclusive of 3 and 4G).
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and/or sex and relationships education.
- Ensure that a designated teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, including working with the local authority's virtual school headteacher and discuss how pupil premium funding for looked after children will be used.

## **Information for parents/carers**

At Excelsior Academy governors and staff are committed to keeping our children safe and will take any reasonable action to safeguarding and promote their welfare. In cases where the school has reason to be concerned that a child may be subject to significant harm, ill-treatment, neglect or other forms of abuse, staff have no alternative but to follow the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board procedures and inform the Initial Response Service or police of their concern.

## **Procedures**

The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy designated safeguarding lead will be informed immediately by an employee of the school, pupil of the school, parent/carer of the school, other persons, in the following circumstances:

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

The threshold of significant harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 Section 31 (9) as:

- Ill treatment.
- Impairment of health (as compared to a similar child).

*Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002).*

Working together 2015 defines the categories of harm as:

### **Physical abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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.

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

### **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 physical penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the

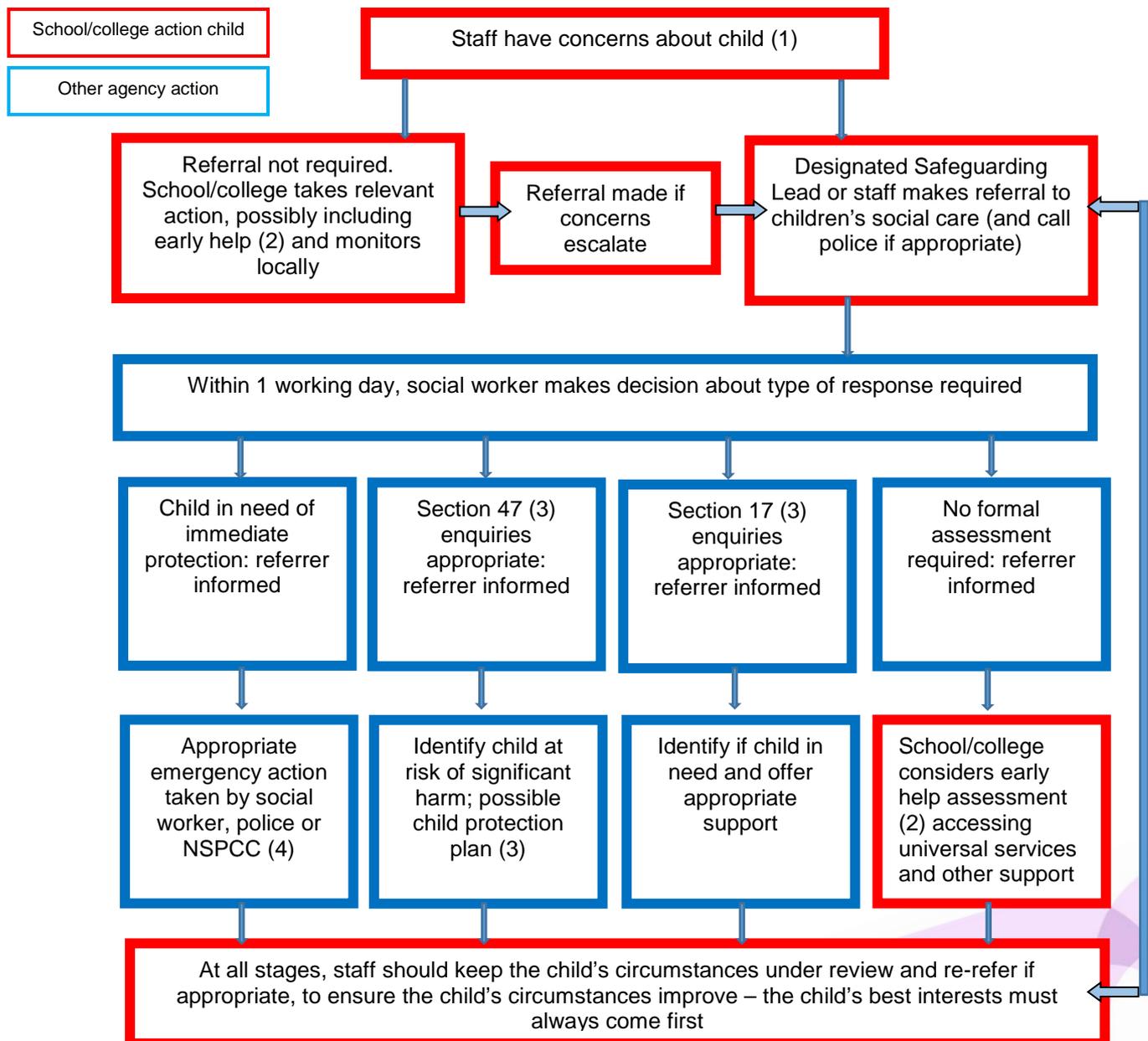
production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **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 involve 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 from 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 may occur alone.

The designated safeguarding lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to the Initial Response Service, if necessary. These records may be either handwritten or electronic but will be stored via a secure system. The Executive Principal will be kept informed at all times.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, and early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details guidance on the early help process
3. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include s17 assessments of children in need and s47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguarding Children](#)
4. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

## **Safe school/safe staff**

Governors have agreed and ratified the following policies, procedures, processes or systems which must be read and considered in conjunction with this policy.

## **Whistle blowing/confidential reporting**

Excelsior Academy whistle blowing/confidential reporting policies provides guidance to staff and volunteers on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken, when staff have concerns about any adults behaviour.

## **Complaints/allegation management towards or with a child or adult**

A safeguarding complaint involving a member of staff must be reported to the Executive Principal immediately. Where there are concerns about the Executive Principal this should be referred to the chair of governors. Allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer(s) at the local authority. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's designated safeguarding lead and make any referral via them (KCSIE, 2016: pg 9).

Consultation without delay with the designated officer- Melanie Scott Tel: 0191 211 6730 will determine what action follows. A multi-agency strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context, the Executive Principal/chair of governors (as appropriate) must attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the designated officer. All issues must be recorded on the allegation management form and the outcome reached must be noted to ensure closure. [www.nscb.org.uk](http://www.nscb.org.uk)

## **Training and support**

All staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of their induction into the school to ensure they can discharge their responsibilities effectively. This includes: the child protection policy; staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); safer working practice document and the names of the designated safeguarding lead and their deputies.

All staff members should also receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The governing body will decide the frequency and content of this CPD. At Excelsior Academy our whole school training is held annually. In addition, all staff members should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via staff meetings held weekly or internal CPD as required, but at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively with opportunities to contribute to reviewing and shaping the safeguarding arrangements.

## **Professional confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. Excelsior Academy recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child(ren). See Chapter 2 of the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Safeguarding Children Procedures ([www.nscb.org.uk](http://www.nscb.org.uk)).

## **Records and monitoring**

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice Excelsior Academy is clear about the need to record any concerns, discussions held, decisions made and reasons for those decisions about a child or children within its care. All staff will follow the schools information sharing and recording policies to ensure record keeping is compliant.

Safeguarding recording within Excelsior Academy is held electronically through a secure management system of CPOMS and all staff have received training in the recording expectations and retention. Following a child leaving our Academy we follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines. At Excelsior Academy we started electronic recording from October 2016 all recording prior to this is in paper format. Retention guidelines are followed accordingly.

## **Attendance at safeguarding conferences**

In the event of Excelsior Academy being invited to attend child protection conferences, the designated safeguarding lead or deputies will represent the school and/or identified the most appropriate trained member of staff to provide information relevant to child protection conference (Initial/Review). In the event that those staff cannot attend, the following trained members of staff may attend Martin Jobling, Shaun Findlay, Amanda Dalglish and Mark Bolam.

## **Supporting children (a)**

Excelsior Academy recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Excelsior Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The school, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

As an Operation Encompass partner we work closely with the Operation Encompass Lead with regards to domestic violence incidents and offer wellbeing checks to our pupils if we are contacted following an incident which has occurred in one of our pupil's homes.

Excelsior Academy also recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be

investigated and dealt with appropriately. No peer on peer abuse should be tolerated or minimised as part of growing up and all those involved will be provided with an appropriate level of support. It is understood that those pupils who have experienced abuse in their own lives may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. See peer on peer abuse policy below for detailed information.

## **Excelsior Academy peer on peer abuse policy**

At Excelsior Academy we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

### **Purpose and aim**

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. The purpose of this policy is to explore the many forms of peer on peer abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At Excelsior Academy we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-bullying policy
- Cyberbullying policy

### **Framework and legislation**

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is Working Together, 2015, highlighting that every assessment of a child, '*must be informed by the views of the child*' and within that '*It is important to understand the resilience of the individual child when planning appropriate services.* (Working Together, 2015:23) This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

### **Introduction to abuse and harmful behaviour**

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE, 2016). It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

### **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

#### **Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)**

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

#### **Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)**

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse.

#### **Bullying (inclusive of all types)**

Bullying is a behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone) derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a

group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

(Preventing and tackling bullying, July 2017).

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

It is important to state that cyberbullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal.

This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

### **Sexting**

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

### **Initiation/hazing**

Is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc... There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

### **Prejudiced behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

### **Teenage relationship abuse**

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

### **Expected action taken from all staff**

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents/carers when they become involved. For example; do not use

the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

### **Gather the facts**

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

### **Consider the intent (begin to risk assess)**

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

### **Decide on your next course of action**

If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

If social care and the police intend to pursue this further they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents/carers to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents/carers.

### **Informing parents/carers**

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents/carers or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents/carers as soon as

possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents/carers.

If a young person is deemed to be 'Gillick Competent' following the 'Fraser' guidelines and does not wish you to share the information with parents/carers, then the school must consider this especially for example if the young person is pregnant and this is why they are being bullied (unless this has occurred through significant harm in which case a criminal/social care case is likely or the young person is under the age of 13).

In circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parents/carers or even with them (they may be scared to tell parents/carers that they are being harmed in any way). Where school can evidence they are acting in the best interests of the young person they would not be criticised, however this would be the case if they actively breached the rights and choices of the young person.

The best way to inform parents/carers is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents/carers whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

### **Points to consider:**

#### **What is the age of the children involved?**

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following)

#### **Where did the incident or incidents take place?**

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

#### **What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?**

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

#### **What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?**

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch?

Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Social Care.

### **Repetition**

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

### **Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

### **For the young person who has been harmed**

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future?

If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

### **For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour**

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their

own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an Early Help Referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service).

If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

### **After care**

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

### **Preventative strategies for schools and settings**

For all schools and settings, it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, and most importantly for schools and settings is recognition that peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

This can be supported by ensuring that each school/setting has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This can be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another.

To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice.

It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

It is important that signposting is available to young people in the event that they don't feel confident raising an issue to staff or a peer. It is useful to have a resource board with support services on a wide range of issues so young people can seek their own solutions should they wish to. In the same way external services or support programmes could be brought in to talk to young people about specific issues in support of the prevention of peer on peer abuse.

Finally, it is useful to ensure young people are part of changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within schools. Having a school council and pupil voice and encouraging young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour' will go far in helping to create a positive ethos in school and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

Schools which excel at tackling bullying (and peer abuse) have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that it is the right way to behave. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of

education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. (Preventing and tackling bullying, 2017).

## References

DFE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies. July 2017

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/623895/Preventing\\_and\\_tackling\\_bullying\\_advice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf)

Whatis.com <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/cyberbullying>

New Choices Inc <http://newchoicesinc.org/educated/abuse/TDV/def>

This is abuse campaign

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/410010/2015-03-08\\_This\\_is\\_Abuse\\_campaign\\_summary\\_report\\_2\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410010/2015-03-08_This_is_Abuse_campaign_summary_report_2_.pdf)

Stop bullying.gov

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/index.html#types>

Holding Together: equalities, difference and cohesion, a resource for school improvement planning, published for Derbyshire Education Authority by Trentham Books, summer 2009.

EACH resources for LGBT

CEOP

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Media-Centre/Press-releases/2009/What-does-sexting-mean/>

## Supporting children (b)

Excelsior Academy will endeavour to support all its pupils through:

- The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, self-protection.
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- Approaches which allow children and young people to develop critical thinking, literacy skills and digital literacy skills.

- A curriculum which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain.
- A coherent management of behaviour and discipline policy & procedures inclusive of the use of reasonable force.
- Liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents/carers.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents/carers whenever it is in the child's interest to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in all safeguarding situations.

Excelsior Academy recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. School staff must give consideration to children who are subject to a statement of special needs, an Education Health Care Plan or have a medical condition as these can mask safeguarding issues and must not be dismissed.

Excelsior Academy also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health issues children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

## Links to other Excelsior Academy/LST policies

This policy **MUST** be read in conjunction with other related policies in school.

These include:

- **Robust school recruitment and selection policy**-inclusive of safer recruitment guidance and regulation for example a **single central record** which demonstrates the pre-employment vetting checks for all staff (e.g. identity, professional qualifications, right to work in the UK, further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK including recording checks for those EEA teacher sanctions and restrictions), for the workforce who are in regulatory activity (enhanced DBS, children's/adult barred list, prohibition checks for teachers, section 128 check) and supervision of those who don't meet this requirement.
- **Clear recruitment procedures** which embed keeping children safe across every aspect from vacancy to conditional appointments, induction and an on-going culture of vigilance.

- **Trained panel members** who ensure that the policy works in practice in all recruitment and selection within the school.
- **School staffing (England) regulations 2009**, Regulation 9: require governing bodies of maintained schools to ensure at least one member of a recruitment panel must undertake safer recruitment training to satisfy all requirements in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015 and Working Together 2015. At Excelsior Academy as an Academy we share this commitment.
- **Schools human resources manual** or policies and procedures.
- **Staff behaviour policy (code of conduct) safer recruitment consortium guidance for safer working practices for those working with young people in education settings, October 2015.** The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with young people and agree to work within all policies and procedures to safeguard both children and adults.
- The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings being taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).
- **Behaviour & discipline policy** – inclusive of the use of reasonable force/positive handling.
- **Anti-bullying policy/cyberbullying.**
- **Online safety policy** – inclusive of appropriate usage documentation (covering the use of mobile phones, cameras and all other technology within the school or setting).
- **Inclusion & special education needs policy.**
- **The schools educational visits/off site policy** (reviewed annually) reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips, visits or pupils being creatively educated.
- **Peer on peer abuse policy** inclusive of child protection policy.
- **Photographic and digital imagery policy** with parental consent forms annually signed.
- **Administration of medicines policy and procedures** with trained staff who manage this.

- **Pupils with medical needs policy** and implications for your workforce pupils and partnership with parents/carers.
- **Attendance management policy**- school management for attendance and the partnership with the LA in reporting children missing from education and those deleted from the schools admission register.
- **Missing children policy** – inclusive of runaways, missing, and children missing from education, ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses.
- **Complaints policy.**
- **Allegation management policy.**
- **Confidentiality and whistleblowing policy.**
- **Information sharing policy** (internal and external exchange of information).
- **Looked after children policy** inclusive of named LA teacher whose role is to champion the achievement of LAC in your schools and work closely with the designated safeguarding lead and the virtual headteacher within the LA who has responsibility for LAC.
- **Intimate care and care plan policy** – inclusive of procedure to support pupils who have an accident and either wet, soil or menstruate and need assistance.
- **Unaccompanied travel to and from school procedure** to ensure pupils safety.
- **Single equality scheme.**
- **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum** inclusive of female genital mutilation, domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, mental health and wellbeing and fundamental British values.

This template was originally developed by members of CAPE (National Group of Education Leads for Safeguarding/Child Protection across the North West/East) Sunderland City Council Education Safeguarding Team remodelled and adapted it to suit local needs. In 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 this template was again revised in partnership with Pam Gartland: Safeguarding First Ltd to provide a guidance tool for schools In light of the new statutory DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Approved by SSCB policy and procedure sub-group.

## **Legislation/national and local guidance**

It has been informed by the following legislation and national & local guidance

Education Act 2002 Section 175

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

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

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

Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

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

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/526153/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_guidance\\_from\\_5\\_September\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526153/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_guidance_from_5_September_2016.pdf)

DfE Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596629/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

Children Act 1989/2004

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

Working together to safeguard children DOH (2015)

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

Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board Procedures

[www.nscb.org.uk](http://www.nscb.org.uk)

Early Help Referral Form

<https://www.nscb.org.uk/Early%20Help>

CP Referral

[https://www.nscb.org.uk/sites/default/files/Referral%20%26%20Info%20Form%20-%20Amended\\_1.doc](https://www.nscb.org.uk/sites/default/files/Referral%20%26%20Info%20Form%20-%20Amended_1.doc)

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

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

Data Protection Act 1998

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

Sexual Offences Act 2003

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

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

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

Freedom of Information Act 2000

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

## Review and ratification

This policy will be reviewed annually or in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance. This policy will be updated by our school at any time that local solutions such as front door services in social care or the LADO details change. This policy may also be amended following the annual review with staff where our School's procedures or practices may change following whole staff discussion or training, to ensure it is the most effective policy in keeping our children safe.

This policy must be ratified by the governing body signed/dated by both the Executive Principal and Chair.

Whole-School Policy: **Child Protection  
Children and Young People  
School Excelsior Academy**

Academic Year	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Named cover	Nominated Governor
17-18	Karolyn Thompson	Deborah Nelson	Dr Mohammed Farsi
		Julie Smith	
		Elaine Rose	
		Donna Harrison	
		Kirsty Rutherford	

Review Date	Changes made	Ratification Date by Governing Body

## **Section 2 Signs of abuse in children**

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

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

### **Risk indicators**

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

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

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred. In an abusive relationship the child may;

- Appear frightened of the parent(s)/carer(s).
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development (although full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The parent or carer may;

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

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

## **Recognising physical abuse**

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern;

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

## **Bruising**

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

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

## **Bite marks**

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

## **Burns and scalds**

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds it will always require an experience medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious;

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine).
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements.
- Burns of uniform depth overs a large area.
- Scalds that have a line indication immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water against their will, will struggle to get out and cause splash marks).
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.
- Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of scalds to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

## **Fractures**

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

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

## **Scars**

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

## **Recognising emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse;

- Developmental delay.
- Abnormal attachment between a child and the parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment.
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach.
- Aggressive behaviour towards others.

- Scape-goated within the family.
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children.
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence.
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner', difficulty relating to others.

### **Recognising signs of sexual abuse**

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

Recognition can be difficult unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural. Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are;

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

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are;

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

### **Sexual abuse by young people**

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

Developmental sexual activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each

other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc... It may also be that the behaviour is 'acting out' which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed. If an act appears to have been inappropriate there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative input may be enough to address the behaviour. Abusive sexual activity including any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

### Assessment

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

- **Equality** – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power, control, authority, passive and assertive tendencies.
- **Consent** – agreement including all of the following;
  - understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience;
  - knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed;
  - awareness of potential consequences and alternatives;
  - assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally;
  - voluntary decision;
  - Mental competence.
- **Coercion** – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation, emotional threats of secondary gains and losses, loss of love, friendship, etc... some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people the above information should only be used as guidance.

### Recognising neglect

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

- Failure by parent(s) or carer(s) to meet the basic essential needs e.g adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care;
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause;

- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss;
- Child thrives away from home environment;
- Child is frequently absent from school;
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent;
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods.

### **Child sexual exploitation**

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

- Underage sexual activity;
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour;
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex;
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections;
- In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriages;
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources;
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile;
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs);
- Changes in the way they dress;
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends;
- Seen at known places of concern;
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities , not knowing where they are;
- Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults;
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends;
- Contact with known perpetrators;
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations;
- Hanging out with groups of older pupils, or anti-social groups or with vulnerable peers;
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation;
- Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations;
- Truancy, exclusions, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual);
- Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress;
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders;
- Drug or alcohol misuse;
- Getting involved in crime;
- Police involvement, police records;
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership;

- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

### **Sexting**

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as 'sexting' there is no clear definition of 'sexting'. Many professionals consider sexting to be sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobile devices or over the internet.

### **Radicalisation**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is like to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in different ways and settings, specific background factors may contribute to the vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing 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.

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

It is a legal requirement to have an admission register, which must be accurate. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. It is imperative that registers are taken accurately within the first 15 minutes of a lesson/session. The local authority must be informed of any pupil who is going to be removed from roll. Staff understand that should they hear a child say they are not going to be in school for any reason they **MUST** report this to management. Our schools adhere to the Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities – September 2016.

### **Private fostering**

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if registered disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer for 28 days or more. Professionals who come into contact with a private fostering arrangement must report this to the DSL, who has a responsibility to report this to Children's Social Care.

### **Forced Marriage (FM)**

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service's definition of domestic violence. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistle-blowing may come from younger siblings other indicators may be detected by

change in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party.

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

Honour based violence encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage (FM) and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM. All staff have a mandatory duty to report disclosures on FGM about a female under 18 **personally** to the police.

### **What is FGM?**

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 types of procedure;

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

### **Why is it carried out?**

Belief that;

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

## Is FGM legal?

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

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening;

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

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM;

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities.
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued.
- Bladder or menstrual problems.
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable.
- Complaining about pain between the legs.
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group.
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity.
- Repeated urinal tract infection.
- Disclosure.

The 'one chance' rule

As with forced marriage there is the one chance rule. It is essential that settings/schools/colleges take action without delay.