

Langley Grammar School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

July 2019



1. Introduction

At Langley Grammar School the wellbeing and safety of all students is of paramount importance. The Governing Board takes seriously its responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act (2002) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern. All staff at Langley Grammar School should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of each individual.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act (2002), and in line with government publications: *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'* (2015), Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 *'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families'* (2000), *'What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused'* (2015).

The principles outlined in this policy reflect and are compliant with the publications: *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (September 2019) and *'Safeguarding Children and Young People and Young Vulnerable Adults Policy'* 2015. The policy takes note of national guidance and further information for parents, carers and adults working with young people is provided within the appendices. Links with other school policies can be found in the overarching document ***Safeguarding at Langley Grammar School***.

2. Policy aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- a) support students' development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- b) provide an environment in which students feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, confident they will be effectively listened to;
- c) raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard our students, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting concerns and possible cases of abuse (see Appendices 1 and 2);
- d) provide a systematic means of monitoring students known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we contribute to assessments of their need and support packages;
- e) emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff;
- f) outline the structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse or other more general safeguarding concerns;
- g) develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care;
- h) ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to students have undergone appropriate checks including verification of identity and qualifications, and a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure, and that a central record is kept for audit.

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

3. Governing Board responsibilities

All members of the Governing Board understand their responsibilities to ensure that:

- a) there is a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy in place together with a staff Code of Conduct;
- b) the school operates safer recruitment procedures which include key members of staff and the Governing Board attending a recognised Safer Recruitment Course and that at least one person on every recruitment panel has completed Safer Recruitment training;
- c) the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and for making a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has left the school as a consequence of safeguarding concerns;
- d) a senior leader acts as Lead Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and has Child Protection Officer responsibilities;
- e) all staff including the DSL receive safeguarding training in line with national guidance and local advice from the Slough LSCB, updated as appropriate;
- f) any weaknesses in Child Protection procedures are remedied immediately;
- g) a member of the Governing Board (usually the Chair) is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher;
- h) safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually and that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on the school website;
- i) appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that students are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material; ;
- j) particular attention is given to students who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) as additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group;
- k) appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, are put in place to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future;
- l) students are taught about safeguarding as part of a broad and balanced curriculum;
- m) that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out for all Governors;
- n) the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'*.
- o) they have read Part 1 of the most recent version of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*.

4. Responsibilities for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The designated safeguarding lead (or a designated deputy) is most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

The DSL (or his/her designated deputy) is responsible for:

- a) referring a student to the relevant Local Authority (according to where they live) if there are general safeguarding concerns or possible abuse, and acting as a focal point for relevant staff to discuss concerns;
- b) liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate where Early Help is thought to be the best option;
- c) referring concerns about possible radicalisation to the local Prevent team or Social Care as required;
- d) refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required;
- e) managing any support for a student internally via the school's own pastoral support processes;

- f) keeping written records of concerns about a student even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- g) ensuring that all safeguarding records are kept confidentially and securely, are separate from students' main school records, and are retained until the student's 25th birthday;
- h) ensuring that an indication of the existence of additional safeguarding information is marked on the student's main school records;
- i) liaising with other agencies and professionals;
- j) ensuring that where a student leaves the school, their safeguarding file is copied to the new school or college as soon as possible.;
- k) ensuring that either they or the staff member attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report which has been shared with the parents;
- l) ensuring that any student currently with a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team;
- m) organising child protection induction for all new staff and regular training and updates for all school staff on at least an annual basis;
- n) providing, in consultation with the Headteacher, an annual report for the governing board, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures, training undertaken by the DSL and by all staff and governors, number and type of incidents/cases, and number of students on the child protection register in an anonymised format.

5. Staff awareness

All staff, volunteers and governors have regular safeguarding awareness training, In addition all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required but at least annually.

All staff and volunteers are made aware of the systems and procedures within the school which support safeguarding and these are explained to them as part of staff induction. These include:

- the child protection policy;
- the behaviour policy;
- the staff code of conduct
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;

the identity and role of the designated safeguarding lead and other members of the safeguarding team.

Safeguarding themes that are particularly relevant to our school will be highlighted during induction sessions and in follow-up training for all staff and volunteers. These themes include, but are not limited to:

- Domestic abuse
- Youth Produced Sexual Images
- Extremism and radicalisation
- Peer on peer abuse (including cyberbullying)

All staff are made aware that children are capable of abusing their peers ('peer on peer abuse'). This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment (refer to appendices 5 and 6.) and sexting. Bullying incidents are dealt with following the school's **Anti-bullying** policy whilst all other peer on peer abuse will be dealt with using the normal safeguarding procedures as for concerns and disclosures.

Early help intervention is beneficial to children and young people and all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help where there are concerns about a student who may be:

- disabled and has specific additional needs;
- special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- a young carer;
- showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;

The DSL and staff should be should be considering the context within which safeguarding concerns might arise. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider factors are present in a child's life that are potentially a threat to their safety or welfare. . It is important that the school provides as much information as possible as part of the referral process; this will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse;

Staff are made aware of their legal duty as teachers that if in the course of their work in the profession, they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, they must report this to the police. (Refer to Appendix 3)

Parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to safeguarding procedures through publication of the school's **Safeguarding Statement** and this **Safeguarding and Child Protection** policy. The policy is available publicly either on the school website or by other means. Parents or carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy of it via the school website and other school publications.

6. Supporting Students

We recognise that:

- a child who is abused or who witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth;
- the school may provide significant stability in the lives of students who have been abused or who are at risk of harm;
- research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Staff at Langley Grammar School will support students by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and should not be considered an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys";
- challenging behaviours which are potentially criminal in nature,
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school;
- identifying students who may benefit from early help;
- liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- notifying the DSL if there is a significant concern;

- ensuring that appropriate information is copied confidentially to the student's new setting and that medical and safeguarding records are forwarded as a matter of priority where students about whom there have been concerns who leave the school, holding more than one emergency contact number for each student. to give the school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

7. Maintaining confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. We therefore ensure that the Headteacher or DSL will disclose relevant information about a student to other members of staff only on a need to know basis.

All staff are made aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and students within the school. All staff are made aware that they cannot promise a student to keep secrets which might compromise that student's safety or wellbeing.

In general, the school will always undertake to share the intention to refer a student to Social Care with parents or carers unless to do so could put the student at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

8. Supporting staff involved with students subject to child protection issues

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. The DSL and his/her team will, in the first instance, support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties. We will also provide the services of a trained school counsellor or alternative external support if it is requested or felt to be of use.

9. Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a student. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual students or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones and social media by staff and volunteers is provided at induction and can also be found in the staff handbook, the **Staff Code of Conduct** and the **Staff ICT Code of Conduct**.

All staff are made aware in the Staff Code of Conduct that under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

We acknowledge that a student could or may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with students, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher. The school will then follow the guidance set out in its separate **Allegations against Staff and Volunteers** policy. This policy reflects *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2018): Part four: *Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff*.

Details of the NSPCC Whistle Blowing Advice Line can be found in Appendix 4 of this policy. Langley Grammar School also has a **Whistle Blowing** policy which provides guidance on how to raise concerns with the school's senior leadership team, the Governing Board, or external agencies.

The School recognises the remit of the **Slough Local Safeguarding Children's Board** to oversee the investigation of allegations made against those working with children. If it is brought to our attention that there has been an allegation against a member of the community that is making use of the school environment, the Slough LCSB's guidance issued by the Designated Officers within the Local Authority will be followed as relevant to the situation.

10. Physical intervention and reasonable force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools to use reasonable force to safeguard children. 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 students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.

We acknowledge that staff should only ever use physical intervention as a last resort if a student is endangering him/herself or others, and that such intervention must apply the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Any such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. The school also understands that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a student could be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch may be appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff are given 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries. Further guidance on physical intervention is contained in the ***Behaviour for Learning Policy***.

11. Anti Bullying

Further information on this can be found in the school's ***Anti Bullying Policy***. All staff are aware that children with special educational needs, disabilities or perceived differences maybe more susceptible to being bullied or becoming targets of child abuse. We keep a record of known bullying incidents; any racist incidents are also recorded.

12. Prevention of harm

We recognise that the school may play a significant part in the prevention of harm to students by providing them with a protective environment and open communication with trusted adults and supportive friends.

Staff are therefore encouraged to:

- work to establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- include regular consultation with students to check that they are feeling safe and happy during social times at school, for example through assemblies, anti-bullying activities, or involvement with student mentors;
- ensure that all students know there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- include the teaching of safeguarding within the curriculum and provide opportunities to support students in developing the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. This will also include anti-bullying work, on-line safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training;
- ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies.

13. Extremism and Radicalisation

The School has a vital role to play in protecting students from the risks of extremism and radicalisation, underpinned by the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Keeping students safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as protecting students from other risks.

Staff are provided with training to help them understand what is meant by extremism and radicalisation and the indicators that may suggest a student is in danger of being radicalised (**see Appendix 4**). Staff are also made aware of the procedures they should follow if they have safeguarding concerns in this area.

Any member of staff with concerns about a student should follow normal safeguarding procedures and inform the DSL. If the School has concerns that an individual may be vulnerable to radicalisation, a referral may be made to the local Prevent team in the case of students resident in Slough, or to the relevant Social Care team for students resident in other local authority areas.

14. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

All staff are made aware of the signs and symptoms which may indicate such forms of abuse. Staff understand that they must follow normal safeguarding procedures if they have a concern or receive a disclosure from a student regarding CSE or FGM (refer to appendices 1 2 and 3 for details).

15. Online Safety

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such we ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place (refer to the school's **Online Safety Policy** for details).

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation and effectiveness of this Policy will be monitored and evaluated by the designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection, and by the Governors' Student and Community Committee.

This policy will be reviewed and approved in line with the LGS Policy Framework.

Reviewed by: Governors' Student & Community Committee, July 2019

Approved by: Governing Board – July 2019

Review date: June 2020

Appendix 1 – reporting a concern

Staff should follow the procedure set out below if they have a concern about a student, or a student discloses something to them.

In the event of a safeguarding concern or disclosure from a student:

- staff should report the concern or disclosure to the DSL as soon as possible, providing full details through CPOMS*;
- if a student is believed to be at risk of harm, the DSL, Deputy DSL or the Headteacher must be contacted immediately. ;
- staff **must not** start their own investigation;
- staff should share information only on a need-to-know basis only and should not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family;
- staff should seek support if they become distressed or are worried by the incident;
- all subsequent information gathered about vulnerable students or those with safeguarding histories should be logged by the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team;
- staff must not contact the student's parents without first consulting with the DSL.

* CPOMS is the school's online recording system for safeguarding or welfare concerns; all staff have access in school or at home. Email alerts are sent to the DSL and other relevant staff when concerns are logged.

The school's safeguarding team:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Simon Cook simoncook@lgs.slough.sch.uk Extension 8343
Deputy DSL	Zarine Burns zarineburns@lgs.slough.sch.uk Extension 8377
Deputy DSL	Helena Makowski helenamakowski@lgs.slough.sch.uk Extension 8317

Appendix 2 – Recognising abuse and neglect

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with each other.

Definition of Abuse:

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Although much of this safeguarding guidance refers to relationships between adults and children, we recognise that safeguarding issues can also manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

The following provides guidance on signs and indicators of child abuse for staff, parents and carers

Categories of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

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 DSL or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague;
- may require consultation with and/or referral to Children's Services.

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an **abusive relationship** the student may:

- appear frightened of the parent/s;

- act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The **parent or carer** may:

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

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

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- an explanation which is inconsistent with an injury;
- several different explanations provided for an injury;
- unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- the parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury;
- parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment;
- repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help");
- family use of different doctors and A&E departments;
- reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

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, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive);
- repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally;
- variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times;
- the outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush;
- bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting;
- bruising around the face;
- grasp marks on small children;
- bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse.

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

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental **burns and scalds**, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine);
- linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements;
- burns of uniform depth over a large area;
- scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks);
- old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation;

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures 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.

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 following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- developmental delay;
- abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach;
- aggressive behaviour towards others;
- 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 disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners;
- 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 inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

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

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

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

Recognising Neglect

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

- failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care;
- a child seen to be listless, apathetic and irresponsible with no apparent medical cause;
- failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss;
- child thrives away from home environment;
- child frequently absent from school;
- child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent;
- child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

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, miscarriage;
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources;
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile;
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress;
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends;
- seen at known places of concern;
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- contact with known perpetrators;
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations;
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers;
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation;
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations;
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether;
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual);

- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress;
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders;
- drug or alcohol misuse;
- getting involved in crime;
- police involvement, police records;
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership;
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

Child criminal exploitation: county lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Appendix 3 – Honour-based violence (including Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation)

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled following normal safeguarding procedures.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should follow normal school safeguarding procedures as for a concern or disclosure

a) 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 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 changes in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Further advice and guidance can be found on the joint FCO/Home Office website at www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#forced-marriage-unit

b) 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.

FGM involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. There are 4 types of procedure:

- Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris
- Type 2 Excision – 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?

Usually the belief is 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, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

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

The 'One Chance' rule

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

Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that in such case they should make a **referral to the police**.

Appendix 4 - Extremism and Radicalisation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty").

The Department for Education has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support. The Government has launched educate against hate, a website designed to equip school and college leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The website provides information on training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

There is no single profile of a potential terrorist or violent extremist. Indicators may include:

Vulnerability:

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them
- Personal Crisis - Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspirations – Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Criminality – Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/ reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups

Access to extremism / extremist influences:

- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person associates with those known to be involved in extremism - either because they associate directly with known individuals or because they frequent key locations where these individuals are known to operate? (e.g. the child/young person is the partner, spouse, friend or family member of someone believed to be linked with extremist activity)
- Does the child/young person frequent, or is there evidence to suggest that they are accessing the internet for the purpose of extremist activity? (e.g. Use of closed network groups, access to or distribution of extremist material, contact associates covertly via Skype/email etc)
- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person has been or is likely to be involved with extremist/ military training camps/ locations?
- Is the child/young person known to have possessed or is actively seeking to possess and/ or distribute extremist literature/ other media material likely to incite racial/ religious hatred or acts of violence?
- Does the child/young person sympathise with, or support illegal/illicit groups e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?
- Does the child/young person support groups with links to extremist activity but not illegal/illicit e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?

Experiences, Behaviours and Influences:

- Has the child/ young person encountered peer, social, family or faith group rejection?
- Is there evidence of extremist ideological, political or religious influence on the child/ young person from within or outside UK?
- Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a personal impact on the child/ young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour? It is important to recognise that many people may be emotionally affected by the plight of what is happening in areas of conflict (i.e. images of children dying) it is important to differentiate them from those that sympathise with or support extremist activity
- Has there been a significant shift in the child/ young person's behaviour or outward appearance that suggests a new social/political or religious influence?
- Has the child/ young person come into conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices?
- Does the child/ young person vocally support terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work?
- Has the child/ young person witnessed or been the perpetrator/ victim of racial or religious hate crime or sectarianism?

Travel:

- Is there a pattern of regular or extended travel within the UK, with other evidence to suggest this is for purposes of extremist training or activity?
- Has the child/ young person travelled for extended periods of time to international locations known to be associated with extremism?
- Has the child/ young person employed any methods to disguise their true identity? Has the child/ young person used documents or cover to support this?

Social Factors:

- Does the child/ young person have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the child/ young person experience a lack of meaningful employment appropriate to their skills?
- Does the child/ young person display a lack of affinity or understanding for others, or social isolation from peer groups?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate identity conflict and confusion normally associated with youth development?
- Does the child/ young person have any learning difficulties/ mental health support needs?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate a simplistic or flawed understanding of religion or politics?
- Does the child/ young person have a history of crime, including episodes in prison?
- Is the child/young person a foreign national, refugee or awaiting a decision on their immigration/ national status?
- Does the child/ young person have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?
- Has the child/ young person experienced any trauma in their lives, particularly any trauma associated with war or sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence that a significant adult or other in the child/young person's life has extremist view or sympathies?

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders
- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour

Appendix 5 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

This guidance is taken from *Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges (Department for Education, May 2018)*

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

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Sexual violence

It is important that schools and colleges are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence in this advice, we do so in the context of child on child sexual violence.

For the purpose of this advice, when referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual harassment

For the purpose of this advice, when referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment, which might include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

Harmful sexual behaviours

Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviours". Advice on signs, indicators and effects of harmful sexual behaviours is available here: NSPCC: Harmful sexual behaviour: signs-indicators-effects.

Harmful sexual behaviours can occur online and offline and can occur simultaneously between the two. Harmful sexual behaviours should be considered in a child protection context.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Any decisions on how to respond to an allegation sexual violence or sexual harassment are for the school to make on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgment, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Some situations are statutorily clear:

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law;
- creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal (often referred to as youth produced sexual imagery or 'sexting'). This includes children making and sharing sexual images and videos of themselves;
- upskirting, which 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. This is now a criminal offence.

The school may deal with a case internally or, if for example they feel a child may be at risk, will make a referral to social care. Where there is evidence that a crime may have been committed then they will involve the police.

The NSPCC provides a helpline for professionals at 0808 800 5000 and help@nspcc.org.uk. The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff and is especially useful for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies). Other support organisation can be found in the Government advice document: pages 17-19 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

Managing a disclosure

The school's initial response to a disclosure from a child is important. It is essential that victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Normal school safeguarding procedures should be followed when managing a disclosure about sexual violence and sexual harassment

Confidentiality

Staff taking a disclosure should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

The school should only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

The victim may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if it can be justified to be in the public interest, for example, to protect children from harm and to promote the welfare of children. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk);
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed a referral should be made to children's social care; and
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. The starting point is that reports should be passed to the police.

Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, schools and colleges should be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately. Further Information on this is at: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/safeguarding-children-victims-and-witnesses>

In addition to the legal protections, as a matter of effective safeguarding practice, schools should do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Only relevant staff should know the contents of a case.

Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

What to consider

The schools should carefully consider any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to decide on the school's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: might a crime have been committed;
- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children (e.g. is the alleged perpetrator significantly older);
- if the alleged incident is a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- are there ongoing risks; and
- other related issues and wider context. This means assessments of children in such cases should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Options to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

There are likely to be four scenarios:

- Manage internally
- Early Help
- Referral to social care
- Reporting to the police

(refer to Government guidance document for further advice (pages 25-27 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges)

Safeguarding and supporting the victim

It is essential that consideration is given to supporting the victim. The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be

able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school or college is a safe space for them.

Police and social care can signpost the victim to support agencies (refer to page 31 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges)

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator

The school will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On the one hand to safeguard the victim (and the wider student body) and on the other hand providing the alleged perpetrator with an education, safeguarding. The school will:

- consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. An alleged perpetrator may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. Harmful sexual behaviours in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- Make sure that if the alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file.

General Support

See Annex A of *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges* for further information and support.

Appendix 6 - Other safeguarding issues

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safelives: young people and domestic abuse](#)

Children and the court system

Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children aged 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available.

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

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (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, 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 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 DSL (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint [statutory guidance](#) on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation.

Serious violence

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

Appendix 7 – NSPCC Whistle Blowing Advice

The following advice is provided by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation.

Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety.

Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping an organisation identify problems and improve their practices.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is for anyone with child protection concerns in the workplace. The helpline provides support and advice to those who feel unable to get a child protection issue addressed by their employer.

The Advice Line can be contacted anonymously by

- phone on **0800 028 0285** from 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday
- email to help@nspcc.org.uk

The Whistleblowing Advice Line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation and states

"If you think an organisation is putting children at risk, even if you're not certain, call us today to talk through your concerns."

When to call

If you have any concerns about a child in your workplace you should raise this with your employer or organisational safeguarding lead in the first instance.

You should call the Whistleblowing Advice Line if:

- your organisation doesn't have clear safeguarding procedures to follow
- you think your concern won't be dealt with properly or may be covered-up
- you've raised a concern but it hasn't been acted upon
- you're worried about being treated unfairly
- You can call about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now or you believe may happen in the future