



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR GREAT EASTON C OF E VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED INLINE WITH UPDATES OR TERMLY

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**Our School Vision:**

*We are God's children and global citizens. We will be bold enough to use our voices, brave enough to evoke change in the world and strong enough to stand up for what is right. We are valued and are part of a Christian family that grows together in faith, love and kindness.*

*'Let all that you do be done in love'. (1 Corinthians 16:14)*

*Love of learning, life and living.*

*Associated values: Courage, Compassion, Forgiveness and Joy.*

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR GREAT EASTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

*(Keeping Children Safe in Education - DfE, 2021)*

This Child Protection policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021)
- the school Behaviour policy;
- the Staff Code of Conduct;
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Our school has a whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do and underpins all systems, processes and policies. It is important that our values are understood and shared by all children, staff, parents / carers, governors and the wider school community. Only by working in partnership, can we truly keep children safe.

## **2. Statutory framework**

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together \(DfE, 2018\)](#) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements sit under the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) (ESCB). In Essex, the statutory partners are Essex County Council, Essex Police and five of the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering the county.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (*Section 157 for Independent schools*) places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the [SET Procedures](#). Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2021\)](#)

[Working Together \(DfE, 2018\)](#)

Education Act (2002)

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015)

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

[Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE, 2016\)](#)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(HMG, 2018\)](#)

[Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)

[Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (DfE, 2018)

Children Act (1989)

Children Act (2004)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(DfE, 2017\)](#)

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(DfE, 2021\)](#)

[Promoting positive emotional well-being and reducing the risk of suicide \(ESCB, 2018\)](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance \(Home Office, 2018\)](#)

[Teaching on-line safety in schools \(DfE, 2019\)](#)

[Education Access Team CME / Home Education policy and practice \(ECC, 2018\)](#)

[Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - good practice for schools \(ECC, 2021\)](#)

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our school with these specific responsibilities (the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead) are shown on the cover sheet of this document. However, we are clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.

#### **The governing body**

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is Alison Skinner and is named on the front cover of this document. This governor takes strategic responsibility at governing body level for safeguarding arrangements in our school. The governing body ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead, Claire Jackman (Headteacher), and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place, Sharon Scott and Holly Miles (also named on the front cover).

The governing body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The governing body ensures that all adults in our school who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.

The governing body ensures our pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We work in accordance with government regulations which make the subjects of Relationships Education (for primary age pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for secondary age pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory.

The governing body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.

### **The Headteacher**

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. The Headteacher works in accordance with all statutory requirements for safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies)**

The designated safeguarding lead in school has ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies, ensuring all staff are appropriately trained and raising awareness of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to Essex Children's Social Care (Children and Families Hub) are made in accordance with current SET procedures.

They work with the local authority and the ESCB as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

The deputies designated safeguarding lead is / are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy/deputies designated safeguarding lead will act in their absence.

### **All school staff**

Everyone in our school has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. Any child may benefit from early help and all staff members are aware of the local early help process and our role in it. They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) - they do not assume that others have taken action.

## **4. Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021) describes abuse in the following way:

*"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. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children”

Keeping Children Safe in Education refers to four categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our staff will always reassure children who report abuse / victims of abuse that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor make them feel they are causing a problem.

All staff in our school are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware of environmental factors which may impact on a child’s welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). We understand that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely ‘stand-alone’ events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

In addition, staff are aware of other types of abuse and safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. We understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and / or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual / non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images can be signs that children are at risk.

### **Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time, or be a one-off occurrence. In Essex, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

*“Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology”.*

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate. This [one page process map](#) sets out arrangements for CSE in Essex.

### **Children missing from education**

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in school, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep children in school whenever possible.

Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency ([Education Access Team](#), Social Care or Police). Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to.

Our school must inform the local authority of any pupil who has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

We work in accordance with the Essex Protocol for children who go missing during the school day (see Appendix C), to ensure that there is an appropriate response to children who go missing. We are vigilant in our monitoring of children with low attendance as set out in our Attendance policy.

### **Contextual safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our school. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

### **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Our school recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

### **So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage)**

*Female Genital Mutilation* (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

A *forced marriage* is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

### **Mental health**

Our staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact

throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

### Online safety

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. Any pupil can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage and personal circumstance. We want to equip our pupils with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world.

The range of online risks could be categorised as:

**content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, suicide, racist or radical and extremist views;

**contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;

**conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying

**commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and / or financial scams

All staff in our school are aware of the risks to children online and we seek to help children keep themselves safe online in a range of ways - further information about our approach to online safety is available in our Online Safety Policy. We are committed to working with parents and send out regular updates around online safety as well as inviting speakers to talk to parents face to face or more recently using Zoom.

### Peer on peer abuse

Our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and that this may happen in school, or outside of it. Any incidents of peer on peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

Our school recognises that, even though peer on peer abuse / harmful sexual abuse may not be reported, it is likely that it is occurring and we are clear there is a zero tolerance to inappropriate or abusive behaviour. We understand the barriers which may prevent a child from reporting abuse and work actively to remove these.

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence / sexual harassment, 'up-skirting', 'sexting' or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs, challenging inappropriate behaviours when they occur - we do not normalise abuse, nor allow a culture where it is tolerated.

We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor that they are creating a problem by doing so. We have undertaken training by Stonewall and are mindful of ensuring children are developing an age-appropriate understanding of LGBTQ+. Please refer to our Anti-bullying policy and Behaviour policy for additional guidance.

### **Prevention of radicalisation**

As of July 2015, the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Our school operates in accordance with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Social Care and / or the Channel Panel.

### **Serious violence**

All staff are aware of the risk factors and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or 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 a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

## **5. Children potentially at risk of greater harm**

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- The potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

## **6. Procedures**

Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support (through a Child in Need or a Child Protection plan).

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2019)
- [Essex Effective Support](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Any staff member or visitor to the school must refer any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead. Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to the Children and Families Hub and / or the Police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Children and Families Hub via [Essex Effective Support](#). The school may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it. Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place a child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If it is necessary for another agency to meet with a child in school, we will always seek to inform parents or carers, unless we are advised not to by that agency. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, all staff understand they should press for reconsideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead.

If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to Social Care where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) and how to share concerns with them.

## **7. Training**

In line with statutory requirements, the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In addition, all staff members and other adults working with children in our school receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any child protection training undertaken is kept for all staff and governors.

The school ensures that the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate

## **8. Professional confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

## **9. Records and information sharing**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection are recorded in our Records of Processing Activity and regularly reviewed; and our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible using My Concern, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and electronically signed via user login and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly, with tasks or notes as appropriate.

Any records related to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

In line with statutory guidance, where a pupil transfers from our school to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's designated safeguarding lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our school. Where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead may also make contact with the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

Where a pupil joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

## **10. Interagency working**

It is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions.

If a child is subject to a Care, Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the school is part of the core group, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the designated safeguarding lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

## **11. Allegations about members of the workforce**

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct. The school works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (ESCB, 2019) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity).

The school has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff must be referred to the Headteacher (or the Deputy Headteacher in their absence), as they have responsibility for managing employment issues. Where the allegation concerns an agency member of staff, the Headteacher (or Deputy) will liaise with the agency, while following due process.

Where the concern involves the headteacher, it should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.

The SET procedures (ESCB, 2019) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Headteacher, senior named person or the Chair of Governors must inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on **03330 139 797** within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to pupils and parents and HR. The school does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

Staffing matters are confidential and the school operates within a statutory framework around Data Protection.

## **12. Use of reasonable force**

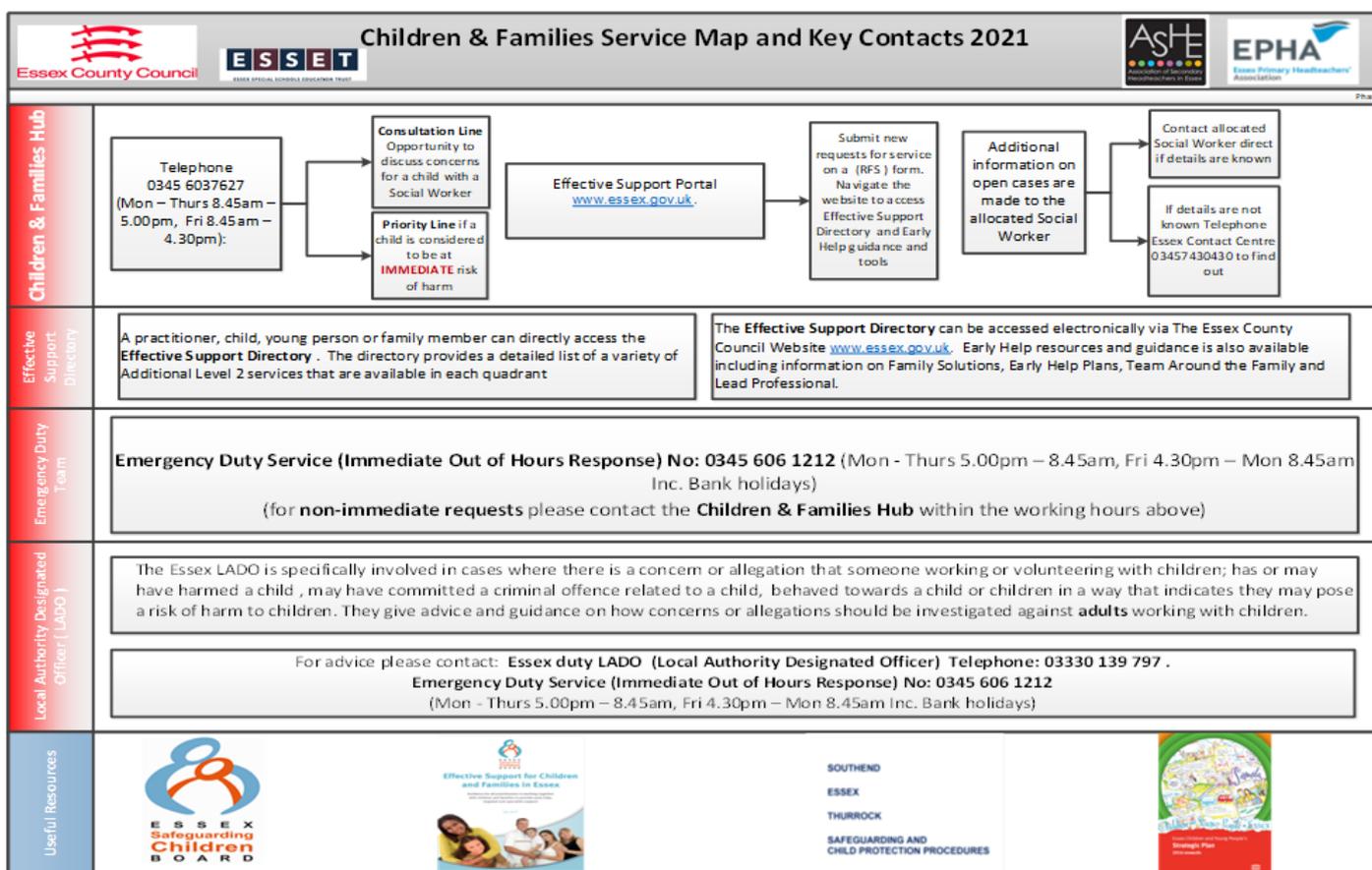
The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force (*see section 2*) and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

## **13. Whistleblowing**

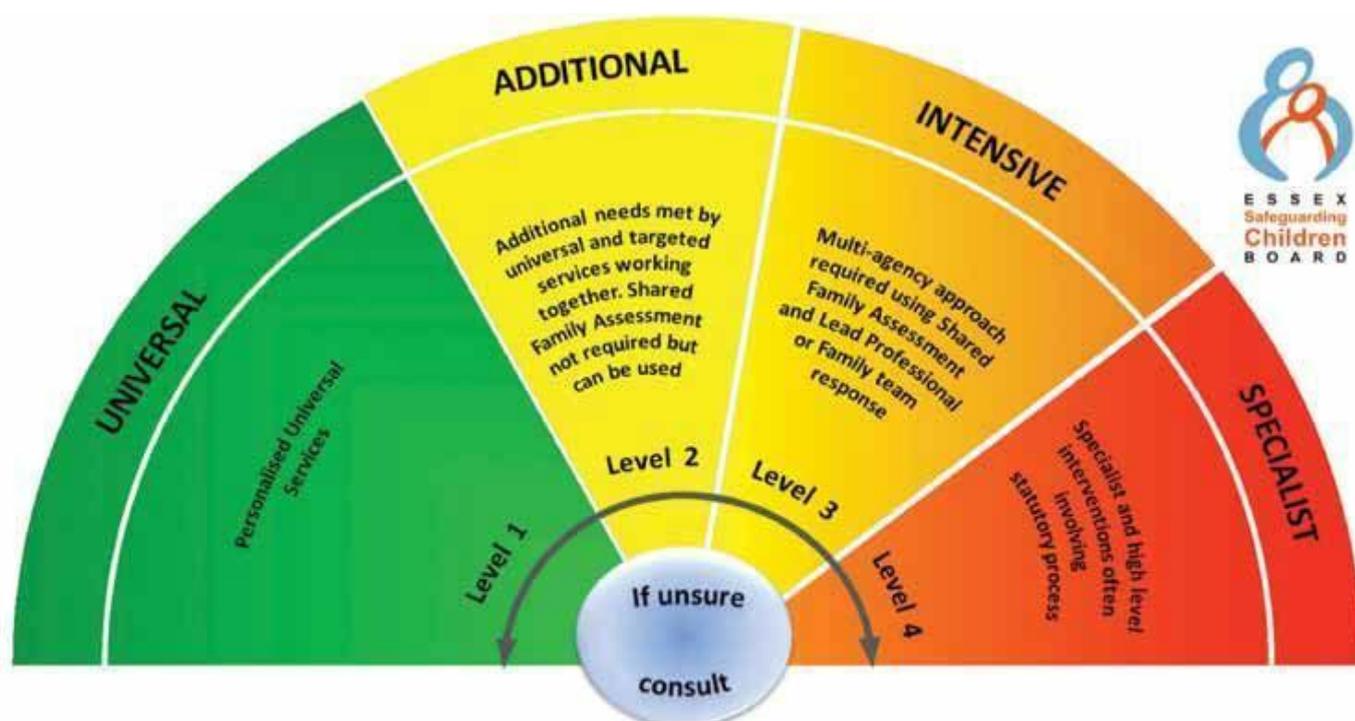
All members of staff and the wider school community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the school leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place and these are available in the school Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/whistleblowing-helpline/) on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## Appendix A: Children and Families Service Map and Key Contacts



## Appendix B: Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention



All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Family Hubs or schools, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment (SFA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

**Specialist** services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist

services are Children's Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services

## Appendix C: Missing Child Protocol

### Arrangements for children who go missing during the school day

#### Definition of Missing

*The definition of missing used in Essex is 'anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and his or her well-being confirmed'.*

(College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice Guidance)

#### 1. Introduction

This guidance sets out the procedures to follow when children go missing from schools and other educational settings, hereafter referred to as educational settings.

Missing children are among the most vulnerable in our community. Sometimes children go missing from educational settings; when this occurs, it is important that action is taken quickly to address this, and in line with local procedures.

This document should be read in conjunction with the educational setting's Child Protection Policy, and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures (SET Procedures).

- [Essex Schools Infolink](#) - for the model Child Protection Policy and other resources
- [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) - for the SET Procedures and other resources

A child going missing could be a 'one-off' incident that, following investigation, does not need further work. However, a child going missing frequently could be an indicator of underlying exploitation or other forms of child abuse.

Educational settings should consider missing episodes like any other child protection concern and take action as appropriate, for example, by contacting parents/carers, the Children & Families Hub consultation line, and in an emergency, the priority line or the police. It may be appropriate to use the Early Help Procedures (including holding a Team Around the Family meeting) to address the issues and prevent escalation. Advice should be sought and concerns should be escalated if there is no improvement.

Where children missing frequently are open to Children's Social Care, a Missing Prevention Plan may be in place. Where this is the case, the educational setting may be set actions as part of the Missing Prevention Plan and should receive a copy if consent has been provided.

#### 2. When a child goes missing

When it is suspected that a child is missing from an educational setting this must be addressed immediately. Active steps to locate the child should be taken, for example, searching the premises and surrounding areas, contacting the child by phone, text and social media, and contacting their parents/carers. If none of these actions locate the child, then they must be reported missing to the Police by dialling 101, **or 999 if there is a belief that the child is immediately suffering significant harm**. It is important that the police are informed of any checks already completed as it may save time and prevent duplication of tasks set by the police to locate a child.

Staff at the educational setting must inform the child's parents/carers that the child has been reported missing. Where there is a Social Worker allocated to the child, they should also be informed.

After a child has been reported missing, any further information should be communicated to the police by telephoning 101 and quoting the incident number that the police would have provided following the initial report. Further information must be passed to the police as soon as possible, as officers will continue to search for the child until informed of their return.

### 3. When the child is found

If the child is found by educational setting staff, or if the child returns to the premises of their own accord, the police must be notified immediately by dialling 101 or 999 if the matter is an emergency. It is important that this action is prioritised, as the child will remain classified as a missing person until seen by the police.

### 4. Essex Police

On receiving a report of a missing child, Essex Police will classify the child as missing and will respond based on the level of risk involved.

Essex Police will conduct a vulnerability interview for all children who have been missing and have returned. It may be that the child refuses to engage or speak with police. On these occasions the parents/carers can assist by reporting to officers their observations on the child's return, e.g. did the child shower, have gifts, appear unwell or under the influence of any substance, etc. The setting may also be able to contribute to this process and should provide the police with any relevant information or observations.

Each child that returns from missing will be offered a 'missing chat' (an independent return from missing interview) by a person not involved in their care. This will be facilitated by the Local Authority with responsibility for the child. Missing chats are offered to all children from Essex who go missing.

#### Useful contacts:

Shane Thomson, ECC Missing Co-ordinator: [shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk](mailto:shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk)

Lucy Stovell, ECC Missing Chats: [lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk)

## Appendix D Definitions of Abuse

Taken from SET LSCB PROCEDURES  
PART A: RESPONDING TO CONCERNS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

### Physical abuse

1. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child; see Part B, chapter 19, Fabricated or induced illness.

### Emotional abuse

2. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, including online;
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### Sexual abuse

3. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

4. Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or 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.

5. In addition; sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under s5 Sexual Offences Act 2003. See Part B, General Practice Guidance.

### Neglect

6. Neglect is 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.

7. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse, maternal mental ill health or learning difficulties or a cluster of such issues. Where there is domestic abuse and violence towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

8. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

9. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional, social, health and educational needs.

10. Included in the four categories of child abuse and neglect above are a number of factors relating to the behaviour of the parents and carers which have significant impact on children, such as domestic abuse. Research analysing serious case reviews has demonstrated a significant prevalence of domestic abuse in the history of families with children who are subject of child protection plans. Children can be affected by seeing, hearing and living with domestic violence and abuse as well as being caught up in any incidents directly, whether to protect someone or as a target. It should also be noted that the age group of 16 and 17 year olds have been found in recent studies to be increasingly affected by domestic abuse in their peer relationships.

11. The Home Office definition of domestic violence and abuse was updated in March 2013 as:

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

This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

·Psychological ·Physical ·Sexual ·Financial

### **Emotional**

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

1. Complex and organised abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related abused children and may take place in any setting. The adults concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority such as a teacher, coach, faith group leader or celebrity position to access and recruit children for abuse.
2. Such abuse can occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community and within institutions such as residential settings, boarding schools, in day care and in other provisions such as youth services, sports clubs, faith groups and voluntary groups. There will also be cases of children being abused via the use of electronic devices, such as mobile phones, computers, games consoles etcetera which all access the Internet.
3. Although in most cases of complex and organised abuse the abuser(s) is an adult, it is also possible for children/young people to be the perpetrators of such harm, with or without adult abusers.

**Recognising signs of abuse** <http://www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk/signs-of-abuse.html>

### **What is abuse and neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Child abuse can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being. The main forms of maltreatment are:

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is deliberately causing physical harm to a child. This might involve punching, kicking, biting, burning, scalding, shaking, throwing or beating with objects such as belts, whips, or sticks. It also includes poisoning, giving a child alcohol or illegal drugs, drowning or suffocation. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of illness in a child. In pregnancy an unborn child can be harmed by domestic violence.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is where repeated verbal threats, criticism, ridicule, shouting, lack of love and affection causes a severe adverse effect on a child's emotional development. It includes conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Emotional abuse

may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child, over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from taking part in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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 ill treatment of children, or it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact including penetrative sex, oral sex, masturbation, kissing, rubbing, or touching outside of clothing, or it may involve non-contact activities such as involving children in watching sexual activities, producing or looking at sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Abusers can be men, women or other children.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect is when a parent or carer fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), medical care, or protection from physical and emotional harm or danger. It also includes failure to ensure access to education or to look after a child because the carer is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In pregnancy neglect may occur as a result of misusing alcohol or drugs.

### **Possible signs of abuse**

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

#### **Signs of possible physical abuse**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries
- Frozen watchfulness

#### **Signs of possible sexual abuse**

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares which sometimes have overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.

#### **Signs of possible emotional abuse**

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration

- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Negative statements about self
- Highly aggressive or cruel to others
- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying

#### Signs of possible neglect

- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice
- Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions
- Frequently left unsupervised or alone
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Frequent tiredness
- Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints which the carer does not respond to
- Frequently hungry
- Overeating junk food

#### Possible effects of abuse

The sustained physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect of children can have major long-term effects on all aspects of their health, development and wellbeing. Children can grow up to feel worthless, unlovable, betrayed, powerless, confused, frightened and mistrustful of others. They might feel, wrongly, that the abuse is their fault.

#### Possible effects of physical abuse

Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability and in extreme cases death. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties.

#### Possible effects of emotional abuse

If a child suffers sustained emotional abuse there is increasing evidence of adverse long-term effects on their development. Emotional abuse has a significant impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy and can be as important as the other more visible forms of abuse, in terms of its impact on the child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be featured in families where children are exposed to such abuse.

#### Possible effects of sexual abuse

Disturbed behaviour including self-harm, inappropriate sexual behaviour, sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem have all been linked to sexual abuse. Its adverse effects may last long into adult life. The severity of the impact on the child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more serious the abuse, the younger the child at the start, and the closeness of the relationship to the abuser. The child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised, can be strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection. Some adults who sexually abuse children were themselves sexually abused as children.

#### Possible effects of neglect

Neglect can seriously impair a child's health, physical and intellectual growth and development, and can cause long term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Extreme cases of neglect can cause death.

#### Further reading

Government publications [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (Department for Education 2015) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2010) contain further information for anyone whose work brings them into contact with children and families.

## Appendix E: What to do if a child wants to talk to you:

Receive Reassure React Record Refer Reflect

### RECEIVE

· If a child wants to talk to you, never ask them to come back later. Ask them what they want to talk to you about and, if you are Remember you have a statutory duty under the Education Act 2002 to pass on any child protection concerns.

If you are concerned about their welfare, give them the time to speak to you.

- Never promise confidentiality, inform the child that you are happy to talk to them but if they tell you anything that you believe may be putting them at harm that you will have to talk to someone.
- Listen carefully to the child. Do not stop a child who is freely recalling information.
- Where a child is visibly upset or has an obvious injury, it is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how an injury was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you to help clarify vague concerns and result in the right action being taken.

### REASSURE

- Ensure that the child is aware that they have done the right thing in talking to you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- If you have any concerns that the child has been, or is at risk of harm, you must tell them that you will speak to someone to get help.

### REACT

- If you need to clarify information ask open-ended questions e.g. "Is there anything you'd like to tell me?", "Can you explain to me... ` `," "Can you describe to me...." (TED)
- Never ask leading or suggestive questions e.g. 'Did he/she do anything that they shouldn't have done?'
- Never ask 'accusing' questions e.g. "Why didn't you tell someone earlier?"
- Never criticise the alleged perpetrator, it may be someone that they will continue to live with.
- Never ask the pupil to repeat their disclosure for any other member of staff, it is your responsibility to share the information

These four factors may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by children's social care or Police.

### RECORD

Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the words that the child has used. Do not record your assumptions and interpretations, just what you heard and saw. Do not destroy original notes even if you later write things up more neatly and fully. Record the date, time and place of the disclosure.

Sign any written records and identify your position in the school setting.

## REFER

· Immediately inform the Designated Person for child protection (Claire Jackman) or in their absence the Deputy Designated Persons for child protection (Holly Miles and Sharon Scott) who will be responsible for following the appropriate procedures.

## REFLECT

Ask yourself if you have done everything you can within your role. Refer any remaining concerns to the designated teacher, e.g. any knowledge of siblings in the school, or previous contact with parents. Dealing with disclosures can be difficult and disturbing; you should seek support for yourself via the support within your school or an alternative source but be aware of principles of confidentiality

## **Appendix F: FGM**

<http://www.fgmaware.org/indicators-of-risk.html>

### **INDICATORS OF RISK**

The key indicators that a girl or young woman is potentially at risk of FGM are:

- One or both parents come from an ethnic group that traditionally practices FGM
- Her mother has had FGM

BUT do not assume that all women who have experienced FGM or all men from affected communities will support the practice.

The girl should be viewed as at increased risk if:

- An older sister has had FGM
- Female cousins of a similar age have undergone FGM
- The mother (and / or father) has requested re-infibulation following delivery
- The parents express views which show that they value the practice
- The girl is withdrawn from all teaching classes on Personal, Social or Health Education
- The level of integration within UK society is also significant. It is believed that communities less integrated into British society are more likely to continue the practice

Different ethnic groups carry out FGM for different reasons, and at different ages. Parents in communities affected by FGM will believe that it is the right thing to do and that it is part of being a responsible parent. In working to protect girls it is very important to find out the reasons why FGM is carried out in her community / ethnic group, and the age at which it is arranged. If a girl is viewed as potentially at risk then there should be increased monitoring and support around the age at which FGM is traditionally carried out in her family / ethnic group.

Practitioners should aim to support parents in resisting any pressure from their family or wider community. In some areas arranging FGM is regarded as a community responsibility and it is possible that community leaders may arrange FGM without the parents knowledge or consent. Signs that a girl is at imminent risk of FGM could include:

- A girl is withdrawn from school to allow for an extended holiday, or a girl talks about a long trip planned during the school summer holidays.
- A girl may talk about “something special happening”, or that there will be “a big party” or “she is going to be a woman soon”
- If forced marriage is suspected or known then risk of FGM should also be addressed where the girl comes from a group that traditionally practices FGM.

## **Appendix G: Breast Ironing**

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/breast-flattening/>

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

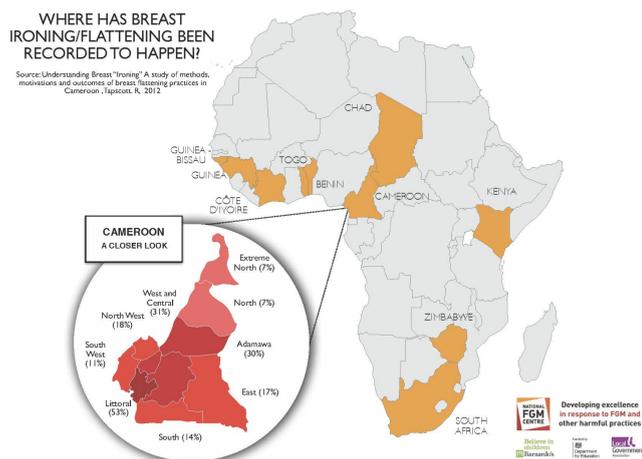
The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem ‘child-like’ for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls’ breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent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

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

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

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

Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as a 1,000 girls at risk. Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their school should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Schools need to know the risk level within their communities and tackle the risk as appropriate.



## Appendix H: Channel: Vulnerability assessment framework

This document provides a description of the vulnerability assessment framework used by Channel projects to guide decisions about whether an individual needs support to address their vulnerability to radicalisation and the kind of support that they need. It should be read alongside the Channel guidance (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/prevent/channel-guidance>).

Channel is a key element of the *Prevent* strategy (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/prevent/prevent-strategy/>). It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners (such as the education and health sectors, social services, children’s and youth services and offender management services), the police and the local community to:

- identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- assess the nature and extent of that risk; and
- develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs.

It should not be assumed that the characteristics set out below necessarily indicate that a person is either committed to terrorism or may become a terrorist. The assessment framework involves three dimensions: engagement, intent and capability, which are considered separately.

### 1. Engagement with a group, cause or ideology

Engagement factors are sometimes referred to as “psychological hooks”. They include needs, susceptibilities, motivations and contextual influences and together map the individual pathway into terrorism. They can include:

- Feelings of grievance and injustice
- Feeling under threat
- A need for identity, meaning and belonging
- A desire for status
- A desire for excitement and adventure
- A need to dominate and control others
- Susceptibility to indoctrination
- A desire for political or moral change

- Opportunistic involvement
- Family or friends involvement in extremism
- Being at a transitional time of life
- Being influenced or controlled by a group
- Relevant mental health issues

## 2. *Intent* to cause harm

Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm, so this dimension is considered separately. Intent factors describe the mindset that is associated with a readiness to use violence and address what the individual would do and to what end. They can include:

- Over-identification with a group or ideology
- ‘Them and Us’ thinking
- Dehumanisation of the enemy
- Attitudes that justify offending
- Harmful means to an end
- Harmful objectives

## 3. *Capability* to cause harm

Not all those who have a wish to cause harm on behalf of a group, cause or ideology are capable of doing so, and plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What the individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration when assessing risk of harm to the public. Factors can include:

- Individual knowledge, skills and competencies
- Access to networks, funding or equipment
- Criminal Capability