

# **Safeguarding & Promoting Welfare of Children Policy**

## **(Child Protection and Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment)**

*This policy is available from our website ([halcyonschool.com](http://halcyonschool.com)) and in hard copy on request. It has been formulated using: Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016); Children missing education - Statutory guidance for local authorities (September 2016); Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information (December 2016); DfE Guidelines on Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015); The Prevent Duty Advice for Schools (June 2015); and LSCB Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition 2017).*

*This policy should be considered alongside and in conjunction with the suite of policies concerning the safety and welfare of students: Anti-Bullying (incorporating E-Safety); Behaviour & Discipline; Educational Trips (incorporating Health & Safety of Students Outside School); First Aid; Supervision; Safeguarding & Promoting Welfare of Children; and Halcyon's Mission: Innovation, Collaboration, Community.*

### **1. Policy Statement**

Halcyon London International School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. The Board of Trustees expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how each adult working on behalf of the school has an active part to play in protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare. All Halcyon staff are advised to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" in relation to safeguarding. Halcyon cultivates a climate where everyone should feel comfortable to speak about these matters openly. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.

### **2. Introduction**

Halcyon London International School takes very seriously its duty towards all its students who have been entrusted to its care and seeks to provide a school environment where all children are safe, secure, valued, respected, and listened to, which is consistent with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile.

We understand the term "safeguarding" to mean that we will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised. We also understand that where we have any concerns about a child's welfare we will take all appropriate action to address those concerns by working in full partnership with other agencies/services.

Our work in safeguarding and protecting children must always have regard for the relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State and should be in line with the London Child Protection Procedures and the local inter-agency procedures of the Tri-Borough Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Our procedures will be followed by all adults, including volunteers, working with or on behalf of Halcyon.

### **3. Keeping children safe**

Halcyon has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We do this by:

- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within Halcyon - supported by a commitment on the part of all stakeholders to the IB Learner Profile
- ensuring that staff (and volunteers) are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection according to their role and responsibilities
- encouraging the self-esteem and self-assertiveness of all students through the curriculum so that the children themselves become aware of danger and risk and what is acceptable behaviour and what is not
- understanding how to identify students who may be at risk of radicalisation and knowing how to support them
- working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- working closely with the school's landlord on safeguarding and site security, including secure management of the building entrance (as detailed in the Supervision Policy).
- displaying appropriate posters that detail contact numbers for child protection helplines
- always following safer recruitment procedures when appointing staff or volunteers to work in our school
- taking all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances permit; and welcoming visitors in a safe and secure manner
- operating robust and sensible health and safety procedures and undertaking the required risk assessments when planning out of school activities or trips
- ensuring that any community groups which use our premises for the provision of services to children operate appropriate child protection procedures
- giving all staff the opportunity to contribute to, and shape, safeguarding arrangements and safeguarding policy.

## 4. Managing safeguarding

All staff must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all students. All staff must know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise.

To this end Halcyon will ensure that all staff (whether permanent or temporary) and volunteers, know who is the member of the School Leadership Team who has been given overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding (the "Designated Safeguarding Lead"), and who is a member of the Wellbeing Team.

The Wellbeing Team is led by the Student Wellbeing Leader, and is comprised of the Student Wellbeing Leader, the School Counsellor, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Student Wellbeing Leader reports to the Director and is a member of the School Leadership Team. The Director reports to the Board.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will support staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.

**Halcyon's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Anthony Gow (Teacher).**

Halcyon's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Stephanie Cooke (Teacher).

Halcyon's Board Designated Safeguarding Lead is Pamela Sears (Chair of Board of Trustees).

The responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are described in Appendix 2.

## 5. Staff training

All staff are made aware, during their induction period (and regularly thereafter), of Halcyon's systems within which support safeguarding, including:

- Halcyon's Safeguarding & Promoting Welfare of Children Policy (this document)
- staff code of conduct
- *Keeping children safe in education: safeguarding information for all school staff (September 2016) (Appendix 1)*
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (March 2015) (Appendix 3)*
- who are the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

All staff are required to sign a document confirming that they have been made aware of, have read, and that they understand, the above information.

All staff receive Child Protection Training to Level 2 and Prevent Duty awareness training, which is regularly refreshed in order that they are equipped with the skills needed to keep children safe. New staff are trained as part of their induction process and before students arrive for classes.

All staff are regularly updated via email and staff meetings as required to ensure their knowledge is kept up-to-date.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Student Wellbeing Leader and Director have higher-level child protection training, Prevent Duty awareness training and training in inter-agency working.

All Halcyon Board members are Level 2 and Prevent Duty awareness trained. At least one Board member will always have the same higher-level child protection training as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be known as Halcyon's "Board Designated Safeguarding Lead" (also known as the "Nominated Safeguarding Governor").

## 6. Recognition of abuse

All staff must be alert to any possible indicators that a child is suffering harm and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### Types of abuse include:

- physical abuse, for example beating or punching; domestic violence; gangs and youth violence; gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- emotional abuse, for example rejection and denial of affection
- sexual abuse, for example sexual assault, child sexual exploitation, or encouraging a child to view pornographic material
- neglect, for example failure to provide appropriate care including warmth or medical attention
- cyber abuse linked particularly to emotional and sexual abuse, for example sexting
- honour-based violence (HBV), including female genital mutilation (FGM) (NB: teachers have a **mandatory reporting duty** for suspected cases of FGM – see section 8 of this policy); forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing
- faith abuse arising from religion or superstition

- peer-on-peer abuse (ie: a student abusing another student).

**Signs of abuse include** (but are not limited to):

- the student says he/she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference
- there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a student's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries
- the student's behaviour is atypical or stands out from the group
- there is a sudden negative change in the student's behaviour
- the student asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons
- the student's development is delayed
- the student loses or gains weight
- the student appears neglected, eg: dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed
- the student is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or carers
- attendance and attitudes to learning deteriorate.

Halcyon recognises that students with special educational needs can face additional safeguarding challenges and that they may face communication barriers and difficulties. Staff are reminded never to make an assumption about possible indicators of abuse nor to dismiss an indicator without further exploration.

**Protecting against radicalisation**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support forms of extremism. Protecting students from the risk of radicalisation is considered part of Halcyon's wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting students from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in student's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

In accordance with the statutory Prevent Duty (under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015), Halcyon will:

- assess the risk of students being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology
- ensure its safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the LSCB
- ensure all staff undertake Prevent Duty awareness training
- ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes more in-depth training so they are able to provide advice and support to other staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- ensure that students are safe from terrorist and extremist material when online in school, through filtering and teaching students about online safety in general
- build students' resilience to radicalisation through Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHEE) education debate and the promotion of fundamental British values.

### **Children missing from education**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

Halcyon has clear procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. The School understands its Local Authority reporting duties as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016)* and *Children missing education (September 2016)*.

All staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

## **7. Teaching safeguarding**

Halcyon students are taught about safeguarding issues through PSHEE as part of our broad and balanced International Baccalaureate curriculum. This will cover knowing appropriate boundaries; how to raise/express concerns; and will explain levels of confidentiality. It will also tackle specific forms of harm and abuse such as peer-on-peer abuse, FGM and radicalisation.

## **8. Responding to concerns about a student**

All children must be able to place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the school in a paid, voluntary, or peripatetic capacity. They must feel sure that they can speak about any worries or concerns they may have and that they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately. All staff must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to talk to them about any matter that raises child protection concerns.

**If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral to children's social care should be made immediately. Anybody can make a referral.**

All staff must:

- listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions
- respect the child's right to privacy but not promise confidentiality
- reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in telling
- explain to the child that in order to keep him/her safe from harm the information that has been shared with must be passed on
- report what has been disclosed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the school as soon as possible
- record, as soon as is practicable, what was said using the child's actual words, including the time and place of the conversation, what was done by whom and in whose presence
- sign and date the record and keep it securely, handing it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- respond to any urgent medical needs of the child
- consider whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm
- check whether the child is currently subject to a Child Protection Plan or has been previously subject to a Plan
- confirm whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff.

If staff have concerns about a child they should raise these with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, but they can refer concerns to children's social care directly. They should also refer to the DfE document *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (March 2015) (Appendix 3)* to help them identify child abuse and neglect and take appropriate action in response.

**The opinions of whoever has raised the concern (especially if a parent or student) must not assume disproportionate importance, nor determine the outcome of the decision to refer.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will use the LSCB's Thresholds: A Continuum of Help & Support tool ([http://www.londoncp.co.uk/files/revised\\_guidance\\_thresholds.pdf](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/files/revised_guidance_thresholds.pdf)) to help decide on the best course of action when a concern is raised about a child.

As soon as concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a referral to the school's Local Authority children's services duty or referral and assessment team within 24 hours. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will confirm the referral in writing to social services within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgement is received within 24 hours, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact social services again.

The school is located in the City of Westminster. Contact details for the Local Authority are:

Children's Services Team: 020 7641 4000 (out of hours: 020 7641 6000)

**Kembra Healy – Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 8753 5125**  
[kembra.healy@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:kembra.healy@lbhf.gov.uk)

Helen Farrell – Head of Child Protection: 020 7641 5341  
[hfarrell@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:hfarrell@westminster.gov.uk)

Shruti Clayton – Tri-Borough FGM Child Protection Advisor: 020 7641 1610  
[shruti.clayton@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:shruti.clayton@rbkc.gov.uk)

Mark Chalmers – Prevent Programme Manager: 020 7641 6032  
[mchalmers@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:mchalmers@westminster.gov.uk)

The London Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) website contains the latest London Child Protection Procedures: <http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

If a referral is not considered appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make full written records of the information that they have received detailing the reasons for the judgement that the matter did not need to be referred to the Local Authority.

When a referral is not deemed necessary, the individual with concerns and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead should monitor the situation. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the referrer should press for re-consideration.

### **Mandatory Reporting Duty for Teachers**

If a teacher has either been told by a girl (under the age of 18) that she has had FGM or has observed a physical sign appearing to show that a girl has had FGM, they

must report the matter to the police by calling 101. Teachers failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve Children's Services as appropriate.

## **9. The role of parents and carers**

Halcyon will inform parents if the school intends to inform the Local Authority of its concerns about a student's welfare. Any information provided by parents at this stage will form part of the school's evidence base that will be passed on to the Local Authority. However, the parents' evidence will not influence Halcyon's decision to contact the Local Authority, which is the final arbiter in the matter.

## **10. Concerns and allegations against staff, volunteers and students**

Halcyon has procedures for dealing with concerns and allegations against staff and volunteers who work with children. These aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures follow the DfE guidance *in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 4. Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff) (September 2016)* and should be used where the member of staff or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Where an **allegation is made against any member of staff (including the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) or a volunteer**, the matter should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will inform the Director. Evidence will be collected in the normal way and then reported to the LADO within 24 hours for advice on how to proceed.

### **Allegations against the Director**

The person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of the Board Trustees/Board Designated Safeguarding Lead), without first notifying the Director. Any such allegation will be discussed with the LADO before further action is taken.

### **Allegations against the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Will be dealt with by the Director and Board Designated Safeguarding Lead following the normal procedures.

### **Allegations against a member of the Board**

The person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Director. Any such allegation will be discussed with the LADO before further action is taken.

**Whistleblowing:** All staff are required to report any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues that are likely to put students at risk of abuse or other serious harm as well as more general concerns which may not immediately seem "serious" enough to constitute a formal "allegation". There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a

report provided that it is done in good faith.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally: 0800 028 0285 / [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

In a situation wherein the School considers that the behaviour of a staff member could possibly place a child at risk of harm, they reserve the right to suspend that member of staff pending an investigation.

### **Reporting to the Disclosure and Barring Service**

If Halcyon disciplines, dismisses, or has someone currently under investigation (or has someone who leaves prior to the end of an investigation) for causing emotional, psychological, physical or sexual harm, neglect or risk of harm to children, the Disclosure and Barring Service will be informed as early as possible. This will normally be in tandem with the disclosure made by Halcyon to the Local Authority.

### **Allegations against students**

Allegations against students should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will then inform Children's Services. Dependent on circumstances, the allegation may also be referred to the police. Halcyon will inform parents of its intention to report the matter to Children's Services before the report is made.

If it is necessary for a student to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, Halcyon will ensure that, subject to the advice of Children's Services, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the student is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

Subject to the advice of the Children's Services and the police, parents and carers will normally be kept informed as appropriate of any action to be taken under these procedures.

## **11. Records**

### **Reported matters**

No one person within a school can be expected to have the full picture of a child's circumstances. To overcome this, Halcyon has a single, comprehensive, detailed, accurate and secure system of reported matters, which is maintained and monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Board Designated Safeguarding Lead to enable patterns to be spotted.

### **Student information records**

Halcyon recognises the importance of keeping up-to-date and accurate information about students and so will regularly ask all parents and carers to provide the following information and to notify the school of any changes that occur. This information is treated as confidential, although shared (as appropriate) with relevant staff:

- names and contact details of persons with whom the student normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility
- emergency contact details



- details of those persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- any relevant court orders in place including those that affect any person's access to the child (eg: Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions, etc.)
- name and contact details of the student's GP
- medical and other needs
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the student.

## **12. Adults working with children: Safer Recruitment**

Halcyon practices safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers (including staff employed by another organisation) to work with children and young people in accordance with the *Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014* and the latest statutory guidance including the Section 128 directive and the requirement for EEA regulatory body checks through NCTL Teacher Services. Key points of Halcyon's recruitment policy are summarised below, please see Halcyon's Recruitment Policy and Procedures for full details.

Where staff from another organisation are working with Halcyon students on another site, written assurances that the required child protection checks have been undertaken are required by Halcyon in advance.

Any tutors or support teachers, will be engaged by bonafide agencies, who themselves undergo statutory requirements for vetting staff, and documents will be verified by Halcyon.

Supply teachers and teachers offering after-school activities will undergo Halcyon's statutory requirements for vetting staff.

The checks include:

- name, address and date of birth, all evidenced and checked and dated
- qualifications, evidenced and checked and dated
- Enhanced DBS (or CRB) Disclosure with a barred list check; checked and dated
- a teaching/management prohibition order check; checked and dated
- evidence of eligibility to work in the UK; checked and dated
- for staff members who have lived abroad in the past 5 years, an overseas certificate of good conduct\*; checked and dated
- medical fitness
- two written references and a CV; checked and dated. Referees are asked specifically whether the applicant has been the subject of any safeguarding concerns.

A record of the checks is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act and contained securely in Halcyon's single central register which can be verified by reference to staff personnel files. All staff will be interviewed prior to appointment and the interview panel will include at least one person who has received training in safer recruitment. The interview process includes specific safeguarding questions exploring applicants' attitudes towards safeguarding and their understanding of current statutory requirements and best practice.

## **13. Adults in the building: Safer Recruitment**

Halcyon shares its site with West London Synagogue (WLS), who also provide educational programmes for children. Permanent scheduled, regular employees of WLS, and permanent, scheduled, regular agency staff contracted by WLS, are required to have statutory child safeguarding and DBS checks. WLS is required to provide the school with written assurance that these checks have been undertaken, and the names, dates of birth and DBS reference numbers will be included in Halcyon's central register of staff, along with overseas police checks as required. All other adults who may occasionally work at, or visit, the site, and have any access to the Halcyon, are supervised at all times while on the premises.

## **14. Children staying with host families**

In situations where children might be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to whom they are not related, this may be – depending on each circumstance – a regulated or unregulated activity.

If the hosting is considered to be “private fostering” under the Children Act 1989 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, or both, and the School has the power to terminate the arrangement, then this would be considered a regulated activity for the purposes of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Where the School is the regulated activity provider, it will request a DBS enhanced check (which will include barred list information) to help determine their suitability for the arrangement.

However, where the parents make the arrangements themselves, this will be a private matter between the child's parents and the host parents and in these circumstances this will not be considered a regulated activity and the School will therefore not be the regulated activity provider.

## **15. Monitoring and review**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead continually monitors Halcyon's child protection and safeguarding practices and brings to the notice of the Board of Trustees any weaknesses or deficiencies. The Board of Trustees, through the Director, has a duty to remedy any weaknesses that are identified without delay.

An annual report is submitted to the Board of Trustees at the first meeting of the new academic year that outlines the child protection and safeguarding work that has been undertaken during the previous academic year. Included in the report are details of:

- the names of staff with designated child protection responsibilities
- confirmation that all new staff and volunteers have been recruited safely and that a record of all staff vetting checks is up-to-date and complete
- the training that has been undertaken by the designated staff
- the training that has been undertaken by all other staff and volunteers
- details of any significant incidents when physical restraint of students has been used
- details of information and guidance that has been given to staff
- details of safeguarding and child protection issues included in the curriculum
- an outline of the filters and monitoring systems in place to ensure online safety, including evidence that over-blocking is not taking place
- confirmation that all child protection records are stored securely and where appropriate have been transferred to another school
- details of safeguarding and child protection information given to parents
- details of the safety of the school site and the access given to visitors

- confirmation that all school lettings have been agreed with consideration given to the safeguarding of children
- numbers of child protection referrals made to Children's Services
- details of child protection conferences or meetings attended regarding children (names of children are not shared)
- numbers of children who are, or have been, subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Following review of this report, the Board of Trustees, Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and the Wellbeing Team will work together on, and urgently prioritise, any aspect of safeguarding and child protection that is identified as an area for development.

*Approved by Board of Trustees, October 2012. Revised February 2013.  
Reviewed 9 August 2013. Revised 26 November 2013. Approved January 2014.  
Reviewed August 2014. Revised December 2015.*

*Approved by Board of Trustees October 2016. Revised March 2017. Revised 1 September 2017. Approved by Board of Trustees 07 September 2017.*

*This policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in light of any significant changes in statutory requirements and legislation.*

## **Appendix 1. Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1: Information for all school and college staff (September 2016)**



Department  
for Education

# **Keeping children safe in education**

**Part 1: Information for all school and  
college staff**

**September 2016**

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## Summary

Keeping children safe in education is statutory guidance for schools and colleges who must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This means that they should comply with it unless exceptional circumstances arise.

- governing bodies of maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools) and colleges;
- proprietors of independent schools (including academies and free schools), alternative provision academies and non-maintained special schools; and
- management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs)

are asked to ensure that **all staff** read at least Part one of the guidance.

For ease of reference Part one is set out here as a standalone document.

# Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

## What school and college staff should know and do

### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance [Working together to safeguard children](#).
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **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.
3. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

### The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
8. Every school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.
9. **All** school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>1</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working together to safeguard children](#)



years. In the first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

10. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in paragraphs 21-27. Staff may be required to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

11. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>2</sup>

### **What school and college staff need to know**

12. **All** staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include:

- the child protection policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one of this document (Keeping children safe in education) should be provided to staff at induction.

13. **All** staff members should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition all staff members should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

14. **All** staff should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

15. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989<sup>3</sup> that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The [Teachers' Standards](#) apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

16. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

### **What school and college staff should look out for**

17. **All** school and college staff members should be aware of the types of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Types of abuse and neglect, and examples of safeguarding issues are described in paragraphs 35-44 of this guidance.

18. Departmental advice [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused- Advice for practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential signs of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on types of abuse and what to look out for.

19. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

20. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

### **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

21. If staff members have any **concerns** about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger - see paragraph 28) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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<sup>3</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need in their area for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Local authorities undertake assessments of the needs of individual children to determine which services to provide and what action to take. This can include:

Section 17- A child in need is defined under section 17(10) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

Section 47- If the local authority have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm they have a duty to make enquires under section 47 to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an emergency protection order (under section 44 of the Children Act 1989) or in police protective custody under section 46 of the Children Act 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working together to safeguard children](#)

22. If anyone other than the designated safeguarding lead makes the referral, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. The online tool [Reporting child abuse to your local council](#) directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

23. See page 9 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

24. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person who made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

25. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

26. If early help or other support is appropriate, the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

27. If a **teacher**<sup>5</sup>, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the **teacher** must report this to the police. See Annex A for further details.

### **What school and college staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm**

28. **If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.** Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead, the designated safeguarding lead should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made. [Reporting child abuse to your local council](#) directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

### **Record keeping**

29. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 5B(11) of the FGM Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides the definition for the term 'teacher': "teacher" means – (a) in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

## Why is all of this important?

30. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect; poor record keeping; failing to listen to the views of the child; failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve; sharing information too slowly; and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.<sup>6</sup>

## What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member

31. If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the headteacher or principal. Where there are concerns about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school as appropriate. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer(s) at the local authority. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's designated safeguarding lead and make any referral via them. Full details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

## What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college

32. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

33. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

34. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

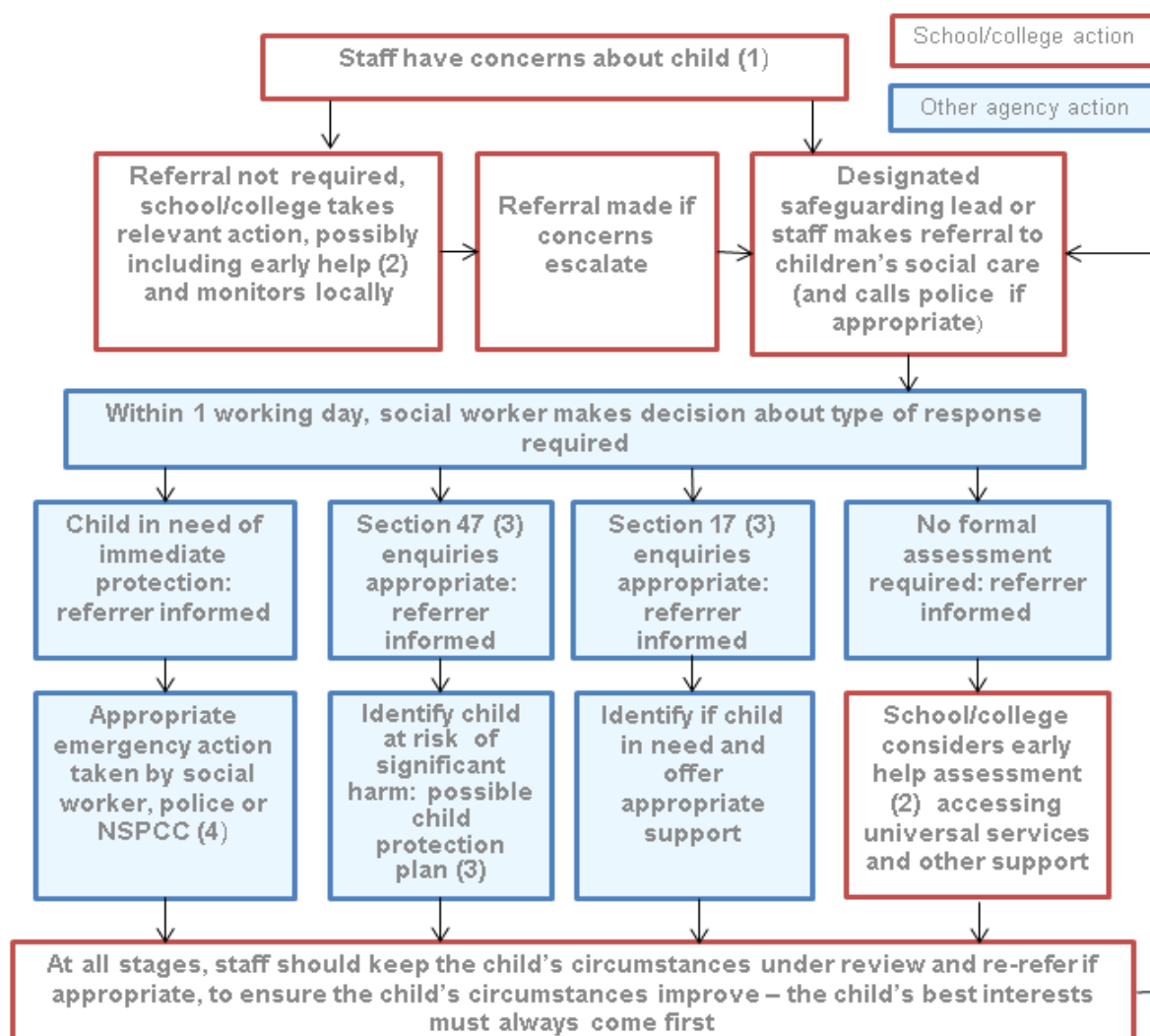
- General guidance can be found at- [Advice on whistleblowing](#)
- The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [Serious case reviews, 2011 to 2014](#)

<sup>7</sup> Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



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

## Types of abuse and neglect

35. **All school and college 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 one another.**

36. **Abuse:** 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 by another child or children.

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

38. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including 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 maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

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

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

## Specific safeguarding issues

41. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

42. **All** staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

43. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools and colleges can be found on the [TES](#), [MindEd](#) and the [NSPCC](#) websites. School and college staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites:

- [bullying including cyberbullying](#)
- [children missing education](#) – and Annex A
- [child missing from home or care](#)
- [child sexual exploitation \(CSE\)](#) – and Annex A
- [domestic violence](#)
- [drugs](#)
- [fabricated or induced illness](#)
- [faith abuse](#)
- [female genital mutilation \(FGM\)](#) – and Annex A
- [forced marriage](#)- and Annex A
- [gangs and youth violence](#)
- [gender-based violence/violence against women and girls \(VAWG\)](#)

- [hate](#)
- [mental health](#)
- [missing children and adults](#)
- [private fostering](#)
- [preventing radicalisation](#) – and Annex A
- [relationship abuse](#)
- [sexting](#)
- [trafficking](#)

44. Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read the annex.



## Annex A: Further information

### Further information on a child missing from education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. School and college staff should follow their procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

Schools and colleges should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the [Children Missing Education](#) guidance.

#### Schools

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. Schools must place pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education.

It is important that the admission register is accurate and kept up to date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur. This can assist the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Schools should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor or irregular. All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has

been absent without the school's permission<sup>8</sup> for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.<sup>9</sup>

Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, **all** schools are required<sup>10</sup> to record in the admission register:

- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
- the new address; and
- the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.<sup>11</sup>

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record<sup>12</sup> in the admission register:<sup>13</sup>

- the name of the new school; and
- the date on which the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

Schools are required<sup>14</sup> to notify the local authority **within five days** when a pupil's name is added to the admission register. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are registered at the start of the school's youngest year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

Schools must also notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register **under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended,<sup>15</sup> as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.** This duty does not apply where the pupil has completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraph (f)(iii) or (h)(iii) if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after jointly making reasonable enquiries. Advice on carrying out reasonable enquiries can be found in the [Children Missing Education](#) guidance.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide<sup>16</sup> the local authority with:

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<sup>8</sup> or by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause or on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs or because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and no suitable arrangements have been made by the local authority either for their transport to and from the school or for boarding accommodation for them at or near the school or for enabling them to become a registered pupil at a school nearer their home.

<sup>9</sup> In default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State.

<sup>10</sup> Under regulation 5 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

<sup>11</sup> Where schools can reasonably obtain this information.

<sup>12</sup> Under regulation 5 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

<sup>13</sup> Where schools can reasonably obtain this information.

<sup>14</sup> Under regulation 12 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

<sup>15</sup> Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Under regulation 12 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Schools and local authorities should work together to agree on methods of making returns. When making returns, the school should highlight to the local authority where they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example in cases where the child's destination school or address is unknown. Schools should also consider whether it is appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as any safeguarding concerns.

**It is essential that schools comply with these duties, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be at risk of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of being harmed, exploited or radicalised.**

The department provides a secure internet system – school2school – to allow schools to transfer pupil information to another school when the child moves. All local authority maintained schools are required, when a pupil ceases to be registered at their school and becomes a registered pupil at another school in England or Wales, to send a Common Transfer File (CTF) to the new school. Academies (including free schools) are also strongly encouraged to send CTFs when a pupil leaves to attend another school. Independent schools can be given access to school2school by the department.

The school2school website also contains a searchable area, commonly referred to as the 'Lost Pupil Database', where schools can upload CTFs of pupils who have left but their destination or next school is unknown or the child has moved abroad or transferred to a non-maintained school. If a pupil arrives in a school and the previous school is unknown, schools should contact their local authority who will be able to search the database.

## Colleges

Where a college is providing education for a child of compulsory school age, the college shall work collaboratively with the appropriate local authority in order to share information about the attendance and/or absences of that child as the local authority deems necessary, as set out in departmental advice [Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in full time further education](#). The college should also inform the relevant local authority immediately if that child is removed from the roll so that the local authority can as part of their duty identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education.

## Further information on child sexual exploitation

**Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

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

## Further information on so-called 'honour based' violence

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), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

### Indicators

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of [the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM](#) (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the [Multi-agency guidelines: Handling case of forced marriage](#).

### Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since

31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**<sup>17</sup> that requires a different approach (see following section).

### FGM mandatory reporting duty

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

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

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.<sup>18</sup> Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

### Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

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<sup>17</sup>Section 5B(11) of the FGM Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides the definition for the term ‘teacher’: “teacher” means – (a) in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

<sup>18</sup> Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published [Multi-agency guidelines](#), with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fmf@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmf@fco.gov.uk)

## Further information on preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.<sup>19</sup> There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

### Prevent

From 1 July 2015, specified authorities, including all schools (and, since 18 September 2015, all colleges) as defined in the summary of this guidance, are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard<sup>20</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".<sup>21</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of the [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#) are specifically concerned with schools (but also cover childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

- Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means

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<sup>19</sup> Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

<sup>20</sup> According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

<sup>21</sup> "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.

- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Effective engagement with parents / the family should also be considered as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms. Schools should also discuss any concerns in relation to possible radicalisation with a child's parents in line with the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures unless they have specific reason to believe that to do so would put the child at risk.
- The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Schools should ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

The department 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.

There is additional guidance: [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#) that applies to colleges.

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.

## Channel

School and college staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme.<sup>22</sup> Channel guidance is available at: [Channel guidance](#). An e-learning channel awareness programme for staff is available at: [Channel General Awareness](#). Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral, the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and, where considered appropriate and the necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges that are required to have regard to Keeping children safe in education are listed in the CTSA 2015 as partners required to cooperate with local Channel panels.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Guidance issued under section 36(7) and section 38(6) of the CTSA 2015.

<sup>23</sup> Such partners are required to have regard to guidance issued under section 38(6) of the CTSA 2015 when co-operating with the panel and police under section 38 of the CTSA 2015.





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## **Appendix 2. The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Job Description)**

Halcyon has designated an appropriate senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This person has the status and authority within the school to fulfill their role and is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out the duties of the post.

Halcyon also has a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who is trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will not be delegated.

The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead are:

### **Managing referrals**

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to Local Authority children's social care as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to Local Authority children's social care;
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

### **Work with others**

- Liaise with the Director to inform him of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- As required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per *Keeping Children Safe in Education Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff*) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member);
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

### **Training**

- Undergo relevant training, updated at least every two years, to understand and keep up with developments relevant to the role;
- Undertake Prevent awareness training (mandatory for Designated Safeguarding Lead);
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- In addition to formal training, ensure that own knowledge and skills are refreshed (eg: via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or reading about safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, but at least annually;
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;

- Have a working knowledge of how Local Authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands Halcyon's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Understand and support Halcyon with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty;
- Provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalization; and
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures Halcyon may put in place to protect them.

### **Raising Awareness**

- Ensure Halcyon's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure Halcyon's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Board of Trustees regarding this;
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and
- Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

### **Child Protection File**

- Where students leave Halcyon, ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

### **Availability**

- During term-time, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) is expected to be available in person, but in exceptional circumstances availability via phone, Google Hangout or Skype is acceptable.

*(Annex B: Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016)*

**Appendix 3. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (March 2015)**



HM Government

# **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused**

**Advice for practitioners**

**March 2015**

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# Summary

## About this advice

This advice is non-statutory, and has been produced to help practitioners identify child abuse and neglect and take appropriate action in response.

This advice replaces the previous version of *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused*, published in 2006, and complements *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015) statutory guidance.

## Who is this advice for?

This advice is for anyone whose work brings them into contact with children and families, including those who work in early years, social care, health, education (including schools), the police and adult services. It is relevant to those working in the statutory, voluntary or the independent sector, and applies in relation to all children and young people irrespective of whether they are living at home with their families and carers or away from home.

## Guiding principles

1. No matter where you work, you are likely to encounter children during the course of your normal working activities. You are in a unique position to be able to observe signs of abuse or neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate a child may be being abused or neglected.

2. You should make sure that you are **alert** to the signs of abuse and neglect, that you **question the behaviour** of children and parents/carers and don't necessarily take what you are told at face value. You should make sure you know where to turn to if you need to **ask for help**, and that you **refer** to children's social care or to the police, if you suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger (see the section on [Taking action](#) for further information).

3. You should make sure that you understand and work within the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that are in place in your area. In doing so, you should be guided by the following key principles:

- children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect;
- safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility;
- it is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging; and
- children and families are best supported and protected when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies.

4. You should not let other considerations, like the fear of damaging relationships with adults, get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect. If you think that referral to children's social care is necessary, you should view it as the beginning of a process of inquiry, not as an accusation.



## Understanding and identifying abuse and neglect

5. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
6. Child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts, and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, including, via the internet. In the case of female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off event. Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.
7. The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Children also develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger child might be normal behaviour for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so you should also be alert to parent-child interactions which are concerning and other parental behaviours. This could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health. By understanding the warning signs, you can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused.
8. There are a number of warning indicators which might suggest that a child may be being abused or neglected.

### **Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:**

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

9. There are four main categories of abuse and neglect: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Each has its own specific warning indicators, which you should be alert to. *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)* statutory guidance sets out full descriptions.

## Physical abuse

10. **Physical abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

11. Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens.<sup>1</sup> Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse.

12. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

### Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries;
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and
- Children with unexplained:
  - bruises or cuts;
  - burns or scalds; or
  - bite marks.

## Emotional abuse

13. **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.<sup>2</sup>

14. Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be in a position to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities

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<sup>1</sup> Brandon *et al.*, *Building on the learning from Serious Case Reviews: A two year analysis of child protection database notifications 2007-2009*, Department for Education, 2010; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-on-the-learning-from-serious-case-reviews-a-2-year-analysis-of-child-protection-database-notifications-2007-to-2009>

<sup>2</sup> Davies and Ward, *Safeguarding children across services: messages from research*, Department for Education, 2011; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-across-services-messages-from-research>

to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

15. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:**

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

## **Sexual abuse and exploitation**

16. **Sexual abuse** is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

17. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:**

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

18. **Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:**

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

## Neglect

19. **Neglect** is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.

20. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse. It is important that practitioners remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action.<sup>3</sup> However, while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify.

21. Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their

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<sup>3</sup> Brandon, Glaser, Maguire, McCroy, Lushey and Ward, *Missed opportunities indicators of neglect – what is ignored, why and what can be done*, Department for Education, 2014;  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/indicators-of-neglect-missed-opportunities>

ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs, or alcohol, over food, clothing or warmth for the child. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:**

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- Children who are left hungry or dirty;
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- Children who fail to receive basic health care<sup>4</sup>; and
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Powell, C. (2003) *Early Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect: A Multi-Professional Delphi Study*, *Child Abuse Review*, 12,1, pp. 25-41

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

## Taking action

22. As well as the responsibility of all practitioners to consider the welfare of children, a number of local agencies have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.<sup>6</sup> If you work in an organisation with such responsibilities, you should ensure that you take account of them in your day to day work. Even if you work in an organisation without such responsibilities you should be aware of and understand the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place in your area.

23. Even if your primary responsibility does not relate to children, many professionals will have the opportunity to observe and identify behaviour which could indicate a child is being abused or neglected. If you work with children on a regular basis, for example, as a practitioner working in a school or early years setting, you are well positioned to be able to identify abuse or neglect, including peer on peer abuse. Even if you are in a profession where you may not encounter the same children as frequently, for example, as a doctor or a police officer, you will nevertheless be in a position to observe signs of abuse and neglect. A police officer attending domestic abuse incidents, for example, should be aware of the effect of such behaviour on any children in the household.<sup>7</sup> Even if you only encounter children infrequently in your job, for example, if you are a probation officer or a housing officer, you may observe possible abuse and neglect (e.g. when dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour by young people).

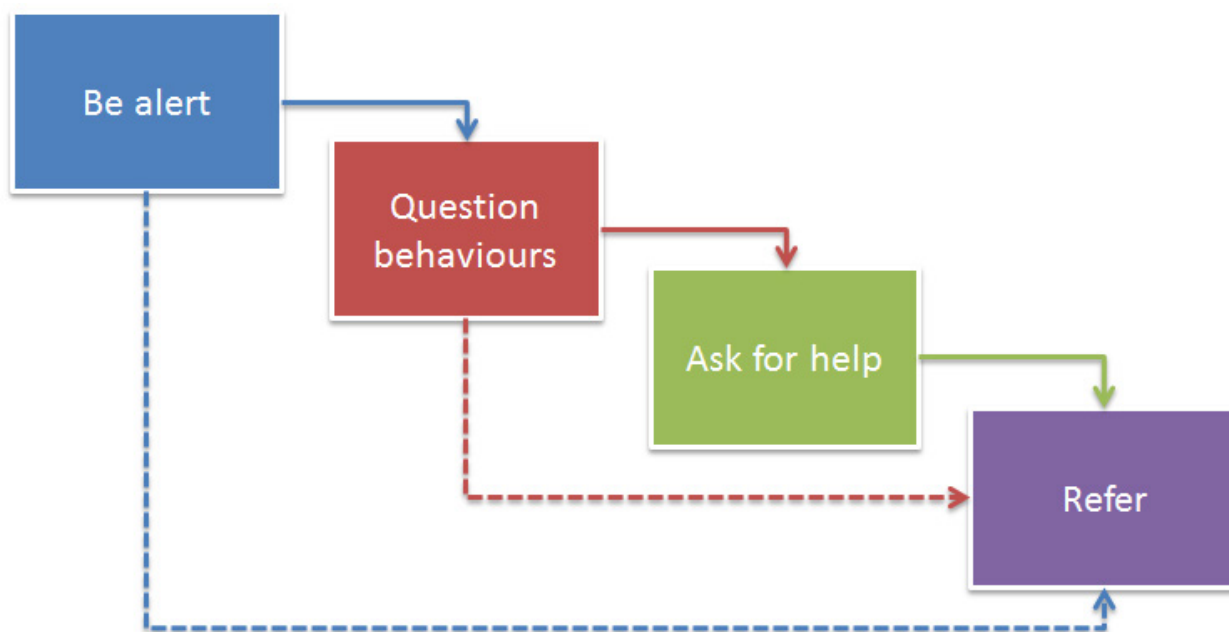
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<sup>6</sup> For example, under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 or section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

<sup>7</sup> See *In plain sight: Effective help for children exposed to domestic abuse*, CAADA's 2nd National Policy Report, February 2014;

[http://www.caada.org.uk/documents/In\\_plain\\_sight\\_effective\\_help\\_for\\_children\\_exposed\\_to\\_domestic\\_abuse.pdf](http://www.caada.org.uk/documents/In_plain_sight_effective_help_for_children_exposed_to_domestic_abuse.pdf)

24. There are four key steps to follow to help you to identify and respond appropriately to possible abuse and/or neglect.



25. It may not always be appropriate to go through all four stages sequentially. **If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, you should refer to children's social care and/or the police.** Before doing so, you should try to establish the basic facts. However, it will be the role of social workers and the police to investigate cases and make a judgement on whether there should be a statutory intervention and/or a criminal investigation.

26. You should record, in writing, all concerns and discussions about a child's welfare, the decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.

## Being alert to signs of abuse and neglect

27. The first step is to be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, to have read this document and to understand the procedures set out in your local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. You should also consider what training would support you in your role and what is available in your area.

## Questioning behaviours

28. The signs of child abuse might not always be obvious and a child might not tell anyone what is happening to them. You should therefore question behaviours if something seems unusual and try to speak to the child, alone, if appropriate, to seek further information.



29. If a child reports, following a conversation you have initiated or otherwise, that they are being abused and neglected, you should listen to them, take their allegation seriously, and reassure them that you will take action to keep them safe. You will need to decide the most appropriate action to take, depending on the circumstances of the case, the seriousness of the child's allegation and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place. You might refer directly to children's social care and/or the police, or discuss your concerns with others and ask for help. At all times, you should explain to the child the action that you are taking. It is important to maintain confidentiality, but you should not promise that you won't tell anyone, as you may need to do so in order to protect the child.

## Asking for help

30. Concerns about a child's welfare can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness, how they have been identified and over what duration they have arisen. If you have concerns about a child, you should ask for help.

31. You should discuss your concerns with your manager, a named or designated professional or a designated member of staff. For example:

- for **schools' staff** (both teaching and non-teaching), concerns should be reported via the schools' or colleges' designated safeguarding lead. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care;
- for **early years practitioners**, the Early Years Foundation Stage sets out that providers should ensure that they have a practitioner who is designated to take a lead responsibility for safeguarding children who should liaise with local statutory children's services agencies. **Childminders** should take that responsibility themselves and should notify children's social care (and, in emergencies, the police) if they have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child;
- for **health practitioners**, all providers of NHS funded health services should identify a named doctor and a named nurse (and a named midwife if the organisation provides maternity services) for safeguarding. GP practices should have a lead and deputy lead for safeguarding, who should work closely with named GPs. Named practitioners should promote good practice within their organisation, provide advice and expertise for fellow practitioners, and ensure safeguarding training is in place; and
- for **the police**, all forces have child abuse investigation units or teams, which normally take responsibility for investigating child abuse cases. If you are a police officer with concerns about a child or young person, you can speak to your child abuse investigation unit or team for advice.

You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline – [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000). Next steps might involve undertaking an early help assessment or making a referral directly to children’s social care/the police.

32. **If you have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child and feel they are not being acted upon by your manager or named/designated safeguarding lead, it is your responsibility to take action.**

### Early help assessment

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges. As part of your area’s local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements there will be processes in place around the assessment of children who may benefit from early help.

An early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. Any frontline practitioner from any agency working with children, young people and families, including the voluntary and community sector, can undertake an early help assessment.

You might, therefore, act as the lead professional for an early help assessment, or be asked to participate in such an assessment. Whatever the case, you will need to work closely with other practitioners to decide whether the child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency.

## Referring to children’s social care

33. If, at any time, you believe that a child may be a child in need<sup>8</sup>, or that a child is being harmed or is likely to be, you should refer immediately to local authority children’s social care. This referral can be made by any practitioner. **If you see further signs of potential abuse and neglect, report and refer again.**

34. When referring a child to children’s social care, you should consider and include any information you have on the child’s development needs and their parents’/carers’ ability to respond to these needs within the context of their wider family and environment.

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<sup>8</sup> Children are considered to be ‘in need’ under s17 of the Children Act 1989 if:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a satisfactory level of health or development without the provision of services;
- their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or
- they are disabled.

## **Information sharing**

It is important to remember that throughout the four stages, sharing information is an intrinsic part of any practitioner's role. The decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when can have a profound impact on people's lives. You should weigh up what might happen if the information is shared against the consequences of not sharing the information. Early sharing of information is key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems. At the other end of the continuum, sharing information can be essential to put in place effective child protection services. For more information on sharing information which includes a myth-busting guide see *Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers*.

## What happens after a referral has been made to children's social care?

35. Once you have made a referral, a social worker should respond within one working day telling you what further action they have decided to take.
36. You might be asked to participate in further assessment of the child, either through an **early help assessment**, through a **child in need** assessment (section 17 of the Children Act 1989) or a **child protection** enquiry (section 47 of the Children Act 1989), which will be led by a social worker.
37. If the social worker suspects that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (i.e. their health and/or development has been or would be impaired compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child), the local authority will hold a **strategy discussion** to determine the child's welfare and plan rapid future action. A strategy discussion can take place following a referral or at any other time, including during the assessment process. You should be prepared to contribute to these discussions by providing information and agreeing what action is required.
38. If concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm an **initial child protection conference** is convened to make decisions about the child's future safety, health and development. If you are involved with the child and family, for example if you are a teacher, a police officer or a health worker, you will be invited. You may also be involved if you have expertise in the particular type of harm suffered by the child or in a child's particular condition, for example, a disability or long term illness.
39. The conference will decide the membership of the **core group** of practitioners and family members who will develop and implement the child protection plan. The core group will meet within 10 working days of the conference. If you are a member of the core group you will help to develop and implement the child protection plan.
40. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015) statutory guidance sets out this process in further detail.

## Protection orders and powers

41. Where there is a risk to the life of a child or a likelihood of serious immediate harm, an agency with statutory child protection powers – children's social care, the police or the NSPCC – must act quickly to secure the immediate safety of the child. This can be via an emergency protection order (under section 44 of the Children Act 1989) or police protection powers (under section 46 The Children Act 1989).

## Further information

### Useful resources and external organisations

- [When to suspect child maltreatment \(National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2009\)](#)

### Other relevant departmental advice and statutory guidance

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2015\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2015\)](#)
- [Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to vulnerable children, young people, parents and carers \(2015\)](#)
- [Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation \(2014\)](#)
- [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(2014\)](#)



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