Abuse and neglect

Abuse & neglect are rarely standalone events covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse:

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

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

Physical abuse:

This is 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.

Emotional abuse:

This is 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 the child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including 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.

Neglect:

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, 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 caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by 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.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021

Other resources:

Useful learning briefs on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children website, Learning from Practice include:

- Intrafamilial Sexual Abuse, June 16
- Sexually Harmful Behaviour, March 14
- Neglect (2) March 2017
- Neglect & Weight Gain, March 16

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Allegations & concerns about staff & volunteers

All settings should have a culture of openness, trust & transparency where their values & expected behaviour are lived, monitored & reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors).

These procedures apply to an adult who works (paid or unpaid) in or with an education setting & has met the following **'harm threshold'**:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child (or young person)
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved/may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Working Together to Safeguarding Children, DfE 18
Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 21

All allegations should be:

- Dealt with by the Head Teacher, Principal, Proprietor, Chair of Governors/Management Committee **i.e. the Case Manager,** even if not the employer (including leading investigations e.g. where supply agencies are involved)
- Responded to quickly, fairly & consistently, protecting the child or young person whilst supporting the person subject to the allegation
- Systematically recorded by the LADO & Case Manager, detailing all decisions & actions

The Case Manager should inform the LADO **within one working day** of an allegation that may meet the criteria above, to consider the nature, content & context & agree a course of action (see process checklist overleaf). The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy should **ONLY** liaise with the "case manager" & LADO about child protection concerns, **NOT** employment issues.

Employers have a 'duty of care' and should:

- Act to minimise the stress in this process
- Inform employees as soon as possible unless the police/children's social care object
- Provide appropriate support to employees
- Appoint a named person to keep the employee informed of the progress of the case
- Advise employee to contact their trade union
- Give access to welfare counselling or medical advice if provided by the employer
- Maintain confidentiality
- Advise all parties about reporting restrictions preventing the publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil/student from the same school or college

Considerations:

- Apply procedures with common sense & judgement
- If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion should consider whether 'reasonable force' has been used
- All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step
- If investigation by the police or children's social care is unnecessary, the Case Manager should consider further options with the LADO
- Resignation/ceasing service provision should not prevent an allegation being followed up
- 'Compromise agreements' must **never** be used
- Referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) must be made if the criteria are met
- Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious should **not** be included in employer references
- A phased return and/or the provision of a mentor may be appropriate if staff have been away from work during investigation

At the end of a case where the allegation is substantiated, the LADO should review the case with the case manager and the relevant Safeguarding Children Advisor, Education, to identify any improvements that are required.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

Andrew Adedoyin, tel.: 07889737078

To make a referral:

- download & complete the LADO referral form
- **securely** email to LADO@sheffield.gov.uk

Do not investigate this matter yourself before getting advice and support from the LADO

Potential investigation outcomes:

- **Substantiated**: sufficient evidence to prove allegation
- **Malicious**: sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation & is a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated**: insufficient evidence to prove/disprove allegation, not implying guilt **or** innocence

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Allegations & concerns about staff & volunteers

Process checklist:

1. **Action required to secure the immediate safety or well-being of child/young person:**

- Does a child or young person need medical attention, to be removed from the scene of an incident, or a member of staff to look after them until their parent or carer arrives? Take required action.
- Report incident or concern to Head Teacher, Principal, Chair of Governors, Head of Service etc immediately

2. **Action required from Head Teacher, Principal, Chair of Governors, Head of Service etc.:**

- Do the **police** need to be involved immediately, e.g. if there is an immediate risk to children or if an offence may have been committed? Take required action.
- Record dates/times of alleged incidents, details of those involved and any potential witnesses
- Gather & secure any already existing evidence, but **do not take statements,** this is a police role
- Listen to the child/young person, encourage them to speak but do not lead or probe
- Verify that the alleged event(s) could have happened: e.g. was the member of staff on duty and present when the alleged incident took place? Are there potential witnesses?
- **Contact the LADO immediately,** either on tel: 07889737078 if advice is needed, or otherwise, **securely email** (e.g. use encrypted attachment) the information to the LADO at LADO@sheffield.gov.uk

The LADO will determine the nature and scope of the investigation and consultation with the police/social care; responsibility for employment matters rests with employer but will form part of the advice given.

- After consultation with the LADO, inform the accused person, providing them with as much information as possible**, unless** the police and Children's Social Care are involved and need to agree what information to disclose and when
- Consider whether suspension is needed or if an alternative arrangement can be made until the allegation is resolved
- Inform parents & carers as soon as possible (**or as advised**, if police/social care need to be involved or a strategy discussion is required)
- Contact your Human Resources Service, especially if suspension or other action is being considered pending an investigation
- Decide what, if anything, you can tell other staff members, considering confidentiality, the views of the member of staff and their representative
- No details should be discussed with other people – all staff must observe confidentiality
- All parties should be advised about reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil/student from the same school or college

Useful web links/resources:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE 2018
- Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures

Related documents: Safeguarding Sheffield Children website, education, policies & procedures:

- Behaviour Guidance & Positions of Trust
- Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy Role
- Governing Body Safeguarding Role

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Allegations & concerns about staff & volunteers

Concerns that do not meet the 'harm threshold':

Low-level concerns about adult behaviour are those that do not meet the 'harm threshold' above but are not insignificant. They often cause a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. e.g. behaviour that is:

- inconsistent with staff code of conduct, including outside work
- over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children/young people on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language

Such behaviour can appear inadvertent, thoughtless, or inappropriate, or intend to enable abuse.

Concerns may arise from a:

- suspicion or complaint
- disclosure made by any child, parent, or other adult
- as a result of vetting checks

Governing bodies and proprietors should have a 'low-level concerns' policy to enable the setting to:

- identify concerning, problematic, or inappropriate behaviour early
- minimise the risk of abuse
- ensure that adults working on behalf of the setting are clear about professional boundaries, act within the boundaries, ethos & values of the setting.

This policy should:

- explain what a low-level concern is
- explain the importance of sharing all concerns
- ensure their staff code of conduct, behaviour, whistleblowing & safeguarding policies & procedures are implemented effectively
- ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children & young people

Education settings should ensure:

- staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is
- staff are confident in distinguishing appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- staff share **all** safeguarding concerns
- they address unprofessional behaviour & support the individual to correct it at an early stage
- they provide a sensitive & proportionate response to concerns when they are raised
- they identify & repair any weakness in their safeguarding system

Reporting:

All concerns should be reported to the Head Teacher or Principal (or Chair of Governors/Management Committee if about the Head/Principal), or if there is a conflict of interest, directly to the LADO.

The Head/Principal will notify the direct employer of concerns relating to supply staff & contractors.

Staff should feel confident to self-refer situations which could be misinterpreted or appear compromising, or if they consider their behaviour falls below the expected professional standards.

Responding:

If the concern comes from a third party, the Head/Principal should speak directly to the person raising the concern, to the individual involved, and any witnesses.

In all cases the Head should protect staff & volunteers from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Recording:

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing and include details of:

- the person sharing the concern (with anonymity respected as far as possible)
- the concern
- the context in which the concern arose
- all action taken & the reasons why

These records must be kept confidential, held securely, & comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 & UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Reviewing:

Reviewing records enables patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour to be identified.

Where such behaviour is identified, the setting should follow its disciplinary procedures, refer to the LADO, consider whether the setting's culture enabled the behaviour, revise policies & provide extra training, as appropriate, to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Retention:

These records should be kept for as long as the adult is associated with the setting and for longer of the setting feels it is appropriate.

References:

Low level concerns should only be included in references if they relate to issues such as misconduct or poor performance.

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Alternative Education Provision

Sheffield Local Authority (SCC) oversees & maintains the Alternative Provision Network (APN) to support schools who direct a pupil off-site for education to improve behaviour, by offering a number of programmes for key stage 1 to 4 pupils.

Alternative provision (AP) should identify & meet the needs of the student to overcome barriers to attainment and improve motivation, self-confidence, attendance & engagement.

Responsibility for safeguarding pupils in alternative provision rests with the referring school or college.

Many of these students will be vulnerable & all will require good safeguarding practices to be in place.

Supporting students - schools should:

- be satisfied that the alternative provider is meeting the needs of the pupil
- obtain written confirmation from the provider that all necessary vetting & barring checks have been carried out on provider staff

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 21

All students should have a regular opportunity to talk to someone from the school or college about their placement & any issues that concern them, in a safe, private, and comfortable environment.

Personalised plans:

- The nature, objectives & timescales of the intervention should be agreed, clearly defined, recorded, monitored, & shared appropriately with the provider, school, parents & student
- Pupil progress should be regularly reviewed including frequent visits to the provider
- Where reintegration to the school is an objective, there should be an assessment of when the pupil is ready to return and an appropriate package of support provided by the school to assist their reintegration
- Plans should be linked to other relevant guidance e.g. 'Education, Health & Care Plans' for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability

Visit our web pages for

'Alternative Education Providers (SCC)'

to find out more about training, the DSL/D role and online-safety provision

All providers must have safeguarding policies & processes which include:

- A robust process for **all** staff to record safeguarding concerns for students
- This information should be kept in a secure, individual paper or electronic safeguarding file
- The safeguarding file should include all information & actions for the student where safeguarding issues have been identified
- An **immediate** process for:
  - Staff to pass on all safeguarding concerns to their Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) or Provider Manager
  - The DSL/D or Manager to refer **all** concerns about a student at risk of significant harm to Children's Social Care
  - The DSL/D or Manager to share all concerns with the **school** DSL/D & record as done
  - Referring a child not on roll to the **Children Missing from Education Team tel. 0114 2736462** (also see 'Children missing from education, home or care').
  - All documentation **must** follow data protection guidance, be jargon free and address all special educational needs, literacy & safeguarding issues.

Training:

The Quality Assurance & Involvement Service (QAIS) only provides safeguarding training, advice, guidance and support to the Alternative Education Providers, SCC.

If a school sets up a contract with an independent provider, the school MUST ensure it is:

- Registered & of good quality
- Delivering services through high quality staff with suitable safeguarding training, policy, experience and employment checks in line with DfE regulations

For further information contact the Progression Team via: Daina.Cummings@sheffield.gov.uk

Safeguarding students over 18 years old:

People who are over the age of 18 who have safeguarding issues are called 'vulnerable adults' and are covered by different guidance and legislation to children.

Issues for students over 18 and for e.g. their parents or carers, must be discussed with the school DSL/D & referred to:

Report Adult Abuse tel. 0114 2734908

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Alternative Education Provision

The school or college should ensure that:

- **All** students considered for alternative provision should be discussed with your Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) prior to referral to identify historic & current safeguarding needs & placement suitability
- Your DSL/D has shared all **appropriate** safeguarding information about the student with the provider DSL and parents or carers before the placement begins
- The student is visited at the provider setting **regularly** by safeguarding trained staff who are aware of the safeguarding needs of the student
- Staff accompanying primary school pupils must have had appropriate safeguarding training and be aware of the pupils safeguarding needs
- Where safeguarding concerns are raised, visits should be more frequent, and all concerns and actions followed up appropriately
- The student has a regular opportunity to talk **privately** to school staff about their placement & any issues that concern them
- Pastoral support is provided to all students on placement as needed
- All students on the school roll are supported to feel part of the school whether they attend the school regularly or not
- **Daily** checks of student attendance at the provider are made through the online register and concerns & absences followed up

The school & the provider should:

- Have an up-to-date safeguarding children policy that staff can access & easily understand
- Provide Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) 'basic' training for all staff every 3yrs
- Provide SSCB 'Advanced' initial & refresher training to their Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy each year
- Have regular internal staff safeguarding briefings from their DSL/D's
- Ensure good safeguarding communication between the DSL/D's for both settings throughout the placement period with agreed appropriate mechanisms of challenge

The SCC Progressions Team ensures that:

- All contractual requirements concerning safeguarding policies, training and recruitment are complied with by the provider
- **All provider staff** have access to Basic Safeguarding Children in Education training every 3 years
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed from the provider management team & has access to regular advanced training
- Staff receive regular briefings about general safeguarding issues from the DSL
- The Provider Manager or DSL will share safeguarding information with their staff **only** on a '**need to know'** basis

Alternative provision to improve behaviour:

Governing bodies of maintained schools can direct a pupil off-site for education to improve their behaviour. They must ensure that:

- parents are given clear information about the placement and how it will be reviewed
- the local authority (where the pupil has a statement of special educational needs) is given clear information about the placement
- the placement is regularly reviewed and parents are involved
- Issues about attendance are discussed immediately with the school the pupil is on roll with and shared with the school DSL/D

Although this does not apply to academies, it is an example of good practice.

Useful resources:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE 18
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Gov.uk
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school, DfE May 2013
- Alternative Provision, DfE 2016

All safeguarding policies & procedures for education settings are available from:

Safeguarding Sheffield Children website, education policies & procedures

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Behaviour guidance & positions of trust

A relationship of trust applies to staff and volunteers in a position of power or influence over a person who is attending and/or receiving education at their setting.

This could mean someone who provides training, care, support and/or supervision for a person.

The 'person' (in this case a pupil) could be someone who is under 18 years old, or who is over 18 and considered to be a 'vulnerable' adult, e.g. they have a disability or mental ill-health.

This power or influence might be abused to persuade, encourage or intimidate a child or young person into certain behaviours or activities.

All education setting staff must recognise the responsibility they have to ensure they do not abuse their positions of trust.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 also helps to protect people from sexual harm.

Whilst the legal age of consent to sexual activity is 16 years, 'position of trust' offences were extended in this legislation to protect 16 and 17 year olds and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse by people in positions of trust and authority.

Staff & volunteers must have:

- Access to and understanding of the policy about 'Abuse of Trust'
- An explanation of the relationship between the Code of Conduct and Abuse of Trust
- An explanation of their responsibilities in a relationship of trust and the sanctions for abuse of that trust
- An full understanding of how to report any suspicions of abuse of trust

Some signs to look out for:

- Staff member or volunteer giving pupil extra attention; spending time with them on their own in private or isolated areas, and/or outside working hours
- Staff member giving individual gifts, money etc.; being affectionate with pupil; visiting at home; making friends with parents or carers
- Staff member flirting with or making suggestive remarks or sexual comments around pupil
- Other pupils making jokes or references about a member of staff & a specific child

'Position of Trust' offences include:

- Causing or inciting a child or young person into sexual activity
- Engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child or young person
- Causing a child or young person to watch a sexual act

There are 2 exceptions to this application:

- Where a person is legally married to, or in a civil partnership with, the young person
- Where a lawful sexual relationship existed before the position of trust arose

Staff and volunteers should ensure that:

- All relationships remain professional and are appropriate to the child or young person's age & understanding
- Their language and conduct do not give rise to speculation

Staff or volunteers may meet children, young people or vulnerable adults who display attention-needing behaviour or profess to be attracted to them:

- Staff should deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately
- Ensure that their own behaviour cannot be misinterpreted
- Ensure that a senior colleague is made aware of the situation immediately

Useful resources:

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protecting children from abuse by someone in a position of trust or authority, NSPCC
- Working with Sexually Active Young People, SCSP
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- Care Act 2014

Related policies: Education policies & procedures, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website:

- Allegations & concerns about staff & volunteers
- Whistle-blowing
- Adult Safeguarding

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Behaviour guidance & positions of trust

The staff & volunteer behaviour guidelines below should read alongside your employer's code of conduct

Remember: someone may misinterpret your actions, however well intentioned

Ask yourself: are my actions fair, reasonable, warranted, proportionate, measured, safe?

DO NOT:

- Use your position to access information for your or someone else's personal advantage or another persons' detriment
- Intimidate, threaten, bully, coerce or undermine anyone
- Use racist, sexist, homophobic or other language or behaviour that is derogatory, discriminatory, or oppressive to others
- Engage in any sexual activity (consensual or otherwise) with a child or young person or a vulnerable adult who attends your setting
- Play inappropriate games or have inappropriate physical contact with a student
- Use disproportionate force when responding to student behaviour
- Jump to personal conclusions/assumptions nor investigate the behaviour of staff, volunteer's, student's or their family yourself (always report to your Head)
- Make suggestive remarks or gestures, tell jokes of a sexual nature, or engage in inappropriate verbal banter with students
- Create a personal relationship with a student where one does not already exist
- Give **any** personal details about yourself or others to a student or family unless you have agreed this with a senior member of staff
- Personally befriend, communicate with or comment about a student or their family via the internet, email, social medium, apps, or other public forum
- Rely on your good name or reputation to protect you if you behave inappropriately - it may not be enough
- Discuss the personal details of any students with anyone without the explicit agreement of the DSL/D or Head Teacher
- Use your personal electronic devices to store information about pupils

DO:

- Encourage regular discussion about general safeguarding issues amongst staff, governors, volunteers, students & families
- Report all health & safety issues without delay
- Keep students safe & protect them from physical, sexual & emotional harm & neglect
- Treat **everyone** with respect
- Look after your physical and mental health
- Be a positive role model and behave in a way that you wish others to follow
- Work with another appropriate adult in all planned activities whenever possible
- Risk-assess all situations when working alone with a student and ensure you can be seen and/or heard by others if possible
- Respect peoples' right to personal privacy (unless you need to safeguard them)
- Create an environment in which people feel comfortable in pointing out attitudes and behaviours they don't like
- Report and challenge all inappropriate and/or abusive activities, including ridicule, threats, intimidation, bullying and discrimination
- Familiarise yourself with all aspects of your settings' code of conduct and whistle-blowing policies
- Report any gifts or money you are given as part of your role at work, and ensure they are not of significant value or intention
- Give gifts (never money) to students **only** as part of an agreed fair and equitable reward system
- Report all concerns about abuse of students or vulnerable adults directly to your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, Head Teacher or Senior Manager as appropriate
- Inform your senior manager if you have a personal relationship e.g. relative or friend, relating to a child at your setting

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Bullying

All children & young people have the right to live without the fear of threats, assaults or harassment, and fear of bullying can seriously affect the victim's wellbeing, behaviour & social development.

Bullying is defined as **'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.**

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE 2017

Bullying can be:

- inflicted by a child, adult, individual or group
- motivated by differences or prejudice
- threatening, intimidating & unconscious
- due to an imbalance of power
- a crime & should be reported to the police
- abuse & should be reported to **The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel.: 0114 2734855**

Bullying includes:

- Physical acts e.g. pushing, kicking, hitting
- Sexual remarks, assault, jokes, harassment, 'up-skirting', see Peer Abuse, Sept 21
- Making or stopping people doing things
- Damaging and/or taking someone's belongings
- Verbal acts e.g. name-calling, sarcasm, teasing
- Saying or writing nasty things, & rumours
- Blackmail or threats
- Showing upsetting material e.g. pornography
- Indirect acts e.g. social exclusion, scaring

Anti-bullying policies should be communicated & understood by all pupils, parents, carers & staff.

Bullying is not a specific crime, but some harassment, threats & communications are.

Cyber-bullying can happen:

- Using technology to torment, threaten, harass, humiliate, embarrass or target
- Via digital technologies or mobile phones
- At any time & with bigger audiences

Authorised staff can seize & examine data on a device without parental consent; if there may be evidence of a crime, pass the device to the police without deleting any data.

Your anti-bullying policy & procedure should:

- Always follow national & local SCSP guidance
- Be referenced in related policies e.g. online-safety, health & safety, behaviour
- Involve pupils, parents, staff in actively reviewing, monitoring, reporting & promoting effectively
- Explain what bullying is (including bullying of staff by pupils, parents, colleagues), that it is unacceptable & will be acted on
- Support & manage both the victim AND the bully
- Ensure training for ALL staff which includes awareness of 'mental capacity' issues
- Include pupil education & development of e.g. empathy, co-operation, conflict resolution skills
- Explain where pupils & parents can get advice and support from
- Advise parents/carers about identifying changes & what to do if they are worried about their child
- Encourage everyone to challenge this behaviour
- Support pupils for whom English is not their first language to communicate their needs & concerns
- Promote inclusion & nurture friendships
- Regularly review & update technological changes
- Include processes for assessing & recording all:
    - current information
    - follow up actions
    - telephone conversations
    - views of significant others
- Follow the Data Protection Act & GDPR 2018
- Ensure all safeguarding information discussed in meetings is recorded in child's safeguarding file
- Be shared with the new setting if a pupil moves
- Ensure DSL/D is aware of when to override a pupils' wishes to safeguard them

The bully may:

- Have been bullied themselves
- Have significant needs
- Think it is fun
- Dislike or be jealous of someone
- Feel powerful and respected
- Feel it gets them what they want
- Be trying to impress their peers
- Get gratification from peoples' reaction

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Bullying

Prevention:

- create a safe, inclusive environment, teach about difference, & that using prejudice-based language is unacceptable
- an ethos of good behaviour and respect
- understanding how actions affect others
- developing parent, carer, pupil awareness & to reinforce good behaviour at home
- clarity about action for bystanders to take
- clear disciplinary sanctions
- work with outside/community organisations
- effective staff training about diversity
- easy process to report bullying, be confident pupils will be listened to & action taken

Indicators:

Behaviour which indicates fear or anxiety should be discussed with the child and parents/carers, e.g.:

- Avoiding people, locations, activities, events
- Fear of walking, changing route to & from setting
- Feeling ill in the mornings
- Truanting, going missing, running away
- A decline in the quality of their work
- Coming home with items destroyed or missing
- Becoming withdrawn, starting to stammer, lacking confidence, changing eating habits
- Distress, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, crying, poor sleep, nightmares
- Asking for, stealing, or 'losing' money
- Refusing to talk about what's wrong
- Unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- Aggressive, unreasonable, bullying their siblings

The victim may:

- experience considerable distress including depression and self-harm
- may not tell anyone because of threats, feeling responsible, that nothing will change, or they should sort it out themselves

Always act, assess the needs of the victim AND the bully, provide support, follow your settings' policy

Useful interventions:

- a quiet word from staff
- pastoral team support
- formal counselling
- engaging with parents
- completing a Family Common Assessment
- a SEND and/or mental health assessment
- referring to CAMHS and/or children's services
- maintaining attendance through on-site or alternative education provision
- applying fair, consistent & reasonable disciplinary measures to the bully alongside any vulnerability
- risk-assess any safety issues for the victim & bully (see Peer Abuse, Sept 21)

Specialist organisations & resources:

- Schools Out UK
- Stonewall
- Bullying UK
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)
- ChildNet
- The Anne Frank Trust
- Think U Know (National Crime Agency)
- Mermaids UK
- Mencap
- Changing Faces
- Show Racism the Red Card
- Kidscape

Further policy and guidance:

- Preventing bullying, DfE 2017
- BIG Award
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, Gov.uk
- Relationships education, RSE and PSHE, DfE 17
- Tackling race and faith targeted bullying
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges, DfE June 21

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Child criminal & sexual exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can:

- be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, children or adults, any ethnicity or background
- be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, on or offline
- happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. shared videos or images of them on social media
- range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- involve force, enticement-based methods of compliance, physical contact, non-contact activities, youth-produced imagery, watching sexual activities, sexually inappropriate behaviour, threats etc

Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and exploitation, as well as being physical, can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Your duty to protect & support does not depend on the child or young person's willingness to be safeguarded.

Vulnerabilities:

ALL children and young people can be vulnerable to criminal &/or sexual exploitation, but are at greater risk if they:

- have a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- live in an unsafe home environment e.g. domestic violence, parental substance misuse, mental health issues, criminal activity
- have experienced recent bereavement or loss
- experience social isolation or social difficulties
- cannot explore their sexuality & identity safely
- are economically vulnerable
- are homeless or in insecure accommodation
- connect with other exploited young people
- have family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- have a physical or learning disability
- are in care, particularly residential
- are excluded from mainstream education
- have gang connections
- are a foreign exchange student
- are a Class A drug user
- use social media unsafely

Warning signs:

- acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. without plausible explanation
- gang association or relationships with controlling or significantly older people
- isolation from peers & social networks
- exclusion, unexplained absences, missing from school, college, home or work
- found out-of-area, in areas known for sex work, in a 'trap house' or 'cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
- excessive texts, phone calls, multiple handsets
- return home indicates drugs or alcohol use
- inappropriate sexual behaviour or infections
- evident/suspicious/unexplained injuries
- perpetrator of violence, carrying weapons
- concerning use of internet/other social media
- increasing secretiveness, self-harm, significant changes in emotional well-being
- involved in taking, moving & selling drugs, concealing drugs internally ('plugging') financial connection to drug dealing
- parental, wider family, friend concerns
- Decline in academic attendance, results & performance

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Child criminal & sexual exploitation

A key factor in CSE & CCE is the presence of an exchange in return for something:

- **Tangible** - money, drugs, alcohol
- **Intangible** - status, protection, perceived love or affection
- **Prevention** of something negative e.g. a threat to harm the child's family

As there is an unequal power relationship, the receipt of something by the child still makes them a victim.

Exploitation can affect any child under the age of 18 years old, however the experience of girls who are exploited can be different to boys.

In the case of CSE, 16- & 17-year olds can legally consent to sex but only if it isn't coercive or abusive.

Sexual exploitation can include contact (penetrative & non-penetrative) & non-contact acts (e.g. online).

Trafficking can be within a very small area, a city, the UK or abroad.

A child or young person who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured, or received for exploitation is a trafficking victim, whether or not they have been forced or deceived.

Modern Slavery is trafficking with slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour.

County Lines describes gangs & organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs over any distance e.g. inside the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

They are likely to exploit children & vulnerable adults to move, sell & store drugs & money using coercion, intimidation, physical & sexual violence & weapons.

Children can be targeted, recruited, threatened & financially coerced anywhere, e.g. educational institution, care homes & social media.

Protective factors for a child or young person can include:

- Enjoying & participating in learning, good home/school links
- Engaging in education, employment, training, planning future career
- Good physical & mental health & development
- Age-appropriate sexual activity, no drug/alcohol misuse
- Positive boundaries, guidance, services, activities & peers
- Parental warmth, support, physical care & good safety network

Useful Web-links:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines HO, Feb 2020
- NSPCC: Child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation & gangs, child trafficking
- Child sexual exploitation: definition and a guide for practitioners, DfE 2017
- Sheffield Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures (Section 3, Children in Specific Circumstances)
- Safeguarding Children who may have been trafficked, DfE & Home Office
- The National Referral Mechanism identifying & supporting victims of human trafficking or modern slavery
- Sheffield Child Exploitation Screening Tool to help professionals to recognise the signs, indicators and protective factors in relation to child exploitation
- Child Sexual Exploitation, November 16, SCSP Learning Brief
- Contextual Safeguarding, December 19 SCSP Team Talk
- Modern slavery, HO July 21

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Child criminal & sexual exploitation

What to do:

- Tell your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy (DSL/D) immediately if you are concerned about any individual, group or community issue involving or suspecting child exploitation, trafficking, etc.
- The DSL/D will use the CSE/CCE screening tool to consider a child or young person's level of risk and contact either the child's social worker or the **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (tel. 0114 2734855)** as appropriate
- If you are concerned about a group or community, you or your DSL/D can ring 101
- If someone is in immediate danger ring 999
- If you are concerned about the behaviour of a person who works (paid or unpaid) with children, the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** should be informed via a LADO Request form.

Where appropriate, the child or young person's wishes and feelings, and those of their parents and carers should be sought and taken into consideration when deciding how to proceed.

However, practitioners should be aware that this may not always be in the child or young person's best interest and may put them at further risk of harm.

Some children or young people may have been trafficked and need support to access services.

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

The Amber Project:

A service for children who are being exploited i.e. are being used for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit which results in harm of the child.

The project brings together the statutory CSE and CCE social work teams as part of a multiagency response. The team also includes police, health, specialist exploitation workers and social workers, working with young people, their families and professionals to educate and support around individuals who are identified at high risk of, or involved in, sexual exploitation, at risk of criminal exploitation, organised crime, grooming, violence and exploitation.

Practitioners cannot refer directly to this service; you must make referrals through the child's current social worker or by ringing the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel.: **0114 2734855**.

All education settings should ensure that:

- A DSL/D is trained and regularly updated as the **Child Exploitation (CE) Lead** for staff & students
- all staff are made aware of and understand CSE/CCE indicators and referral pathways
- students are taught (age-appropriately) about:
  - CSE/CCE and how to protect themselves and each other
  - Healthy (including sexual) relationships, peer pressure, bullying, online-safety, gang activity etc. and how these topics can relate to CSE/CCE
- students know who to go to for help and support, and who to report CSE/CCE concerns to inside and outside the education setting
- relevant staff work in partnership with other agencies & ensure that information is shared promptly & fully
- procedures are in place to gather, record and share CSE/CCE information with the Amber Project, including data on pupils who run away or go missing
- they consider effective ways of raising awareness of CSE/CCE with parents and carers

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Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy

Governing bodies, proprietors, management committees must appoint a member of the senior leadership team as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) & one or more Designated Safeguarding Deputies (DSD's) from teaching, support/pastoral staff.

The DSL:

- Has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online-safety)
- Must have the appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, resources, and support

DSD's should have the same training as the DSL and work with the DSL or act in their absence, but not take lead responsibility. DSL/D's must have this role explicitly stated in their job description.

DSL/D's manage referrals & support staff to refer:

- Suspected abuse to the **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel.: 0114 2734855**
- Concerns about radicalisation to the **Prevent Single Point of Contact,** tel.: **0114 2734855**

The DSL/D should refer:

- Persons dismissed or left due to risk or harm to a child to the Disclosure & Barring Service
- Cases where a crime may have been committed, to the Police as required

The DSL should work & liaise with:

- Health, Police & Local Authority
- The Head/Principal about e.g. ongoing section 47 (Children Act 1989) & police investigations
- The "case manager" & Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) about child protection concerns relating to staff or volunteers
- All staff re general safeguarding issues & updates
- All relevant staff, on a need-to-know basis, about individual pupil safeguarding issues (including online & digital), their academic progress & attainment, identifying challenges & referrals for support
- Relevant agencies about the assessment & protection of children & their attendance at strategy discussions & multi-agency meetings

Keep your safeguarding team details updated on Schoolpoint365, Safeguarding Children Teams area so we can add your training records and communicate with you!

Useful links/resources:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE 18
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021

DSL/D's should raise awareness to ensure that:

- Parents are aware that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and understand the role of the setting in this
- The setting liaises with the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) about staff training & local safeguarding policies
- Safeguarding policies & procedures are updated annually with the Governing Body, known, understood & used by all staff & made publicly available (e.g. through your website)
- Relevant staff can promote educational outcomes of children experiencing safeguarding issues

Training:

DSL/D's **must** attend the Basic, Advanced Initial & annual Advanced Refresher, Prevent & other relevant courses **in Sheffield** and regularly update their knowledge & skills for:

- Staff safeguarding induction & understanding of safeguarding policies
- Early help & statutory assessment processes & children's social care referral arrangements
- Child protection conferences and core groups
- Children in need, with special educational needs & disabilities & young carers
- Data Protection Act 2018, GDPR & information sharing within setting & with outside agencies
- Keeping detailed, accurate, secure records for children with safeguarding concerns & referrals
- The 'Prevent Duty' & radicalisation
- Online safety including risks for SEND children
- Regular staff updates, a 'listening culture' & taking account of children's wishes & feelings

Safeguarding file:

When a child transfers to a new education setting:

- All safeguarding files **should** be immediately & **securely** transferred, separately from the main pupil file, and a receipt should be obtained
- The current DSL/D should make the receiving DSL/D aware of the child's needs prior to the transfer if appropriate and possible
- Receiving DSL/D's should ensure that their key staff e.g. SENCo are informed as needed

Availability:

- During term time the DSL/D should be available in person or, exceptionally, by phone to discuss safeguarding concerns with staff
- A DSL/D should be contactable for staff for all out of hours or holiday activities involving children

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Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as the behaviour of a person towards another person, inside or outside the home, if they are both over 16 years old, are personally connected, and the behaviour is:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse (money or other property, goods or services)
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse

This includes all relationships e.g. intimate partners, ex-partners, family members, teenage relationships & child/adolescent to parent violence, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality, or background.

Children & young people are victims if they see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse & can experience serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impacts. Some blame themselves for the abuse and/or leave the family home.

Young people can experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. Peer abuse or 'teenage relationship abuse' is not recognised as 'domestic abuse' if one or both parties are under 16, however this should be immediately referred to the **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel.: 0114 2734855**.

Operation Encompass operates across England to help police & schools to support children experiencing domestic abuse.

In Sheffield the police report all domestic abuse incidents involving children to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub by the following day.

The Hub then informs the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the child's school to ensure they have up to date information about the child's circumstances and immediate support is in place.

All staff must understand what domestic abuse is and report all concerns to their DSL/D immediately.

Confidentiality and consent:

- Staff must pass all information to the DSL/D **immediately**
- Information must not be given to **anyone else** without the agreement of the DSL/D
- The DSL/D should only share information with practitioners involved with the child & family and/or to make a referral to Children Social Care or the Adult Access Team
- If a person is at high risk of serious harm it is **not** essential to have consent to share information with another agency, e.g. to refer the person to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Safeguarding adults at risk:

The duty to safeguard applies to an adult who:

- Has need for care & support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs)
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- As a result of their care & support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

If you are concerned about an adult with physical or learning disability and/or mental ill-health who is experiencing domestic abuse or violence, contact:

Adult Social Care First Contact Team
tel.: **0114 2734908**

Sheffield Domestic Abuse Helpline:

Tel.: 0808 808 2241

(Mon–Fri, 8am–8pm, Sat 9am–5pm)

Specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) workers (with interpreters available) to listen advise, assess, refer & support people aged 16 or over

The DSL/D will:

- Talk with the staff member, ask them to write it down, put the written record in the child's safeguarding file & review all safeguarding information that the setting holds for the child or young person
- Consider how the needs of the child(ren) can be assessed through the Family Common Assessment Framework (FCAF), the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk assessment (see below) and/or by a referral to Children's Social Care.
- If the child(ren) may be at risk of significant harm, the DSL/D will make a referral through the **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub immediately,** tel. **0114 2734855,** and will **s**hare information appropriately & securely with other involved agencies

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Domestic Abuse

Indicators of domestic abuse:

- Suspicious injury
- Disguising injury through clothing & make-up
- Someone present & answering for the person
- Depression, alcohol, and drug abuse
- Self-harm, anxiety, and self-neglect
- Regular non-attendance for appointments
- Restricted access to money, work, education and a social life
- Children with behavioural difficulties
- Being withdrawn or sleep problems
- Direct disclosure

Routine questions:

Where appropriate we should ask parents that we work with about their relationships, but **never** when their partner is present.

Questions that we can ask are:

- Are you afraid of someone's behaviour?
- Is anyone verbally abusive to you?
- Has anyone ever hurt you?
- Have you or someone you care about been threatened?
- Have you been forced to do something sexual that you didn't want to do?
- Do you feel controlled or isolated by anyone?
- Does anyone belittle or insult you?

How children experience domestic abuse:

- Actual or threatened physical harm
- Being injured while trying to intervene
- Witnessing or overhearing abuse of others
- Being threatened to remain silent
- Seeing ill treatment of pets
- Seeing damage at home, toys, belongings
- Abuse during contact sessions or handover
- Being encouraged to take part in the abuse
- Being abused and/or abusive in intimate relationships
- Lost or reduced contact with parent, family, friends
- Spending time with peers engaged in risky behaviour to avoid home
- Increased involvement in substance misuse or anti-social behaviour
- In the case of homicide, the loss of the non-abusing parent

Young people:

If a young person discloses partnership abuse **always** take them seriously; they may change their story due to pressure, but it doesn't mean it didn't happen.

Young people's relationships:

- Can be less visible and change rapidly
- Abuse can escalate quickly & be very serious
- May be vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation, gang affiliation or sexually harmful behaviour
- May involve the impact of parental domestic abuse & what they think is normal behaviour
- May include cultural factors that might make it more difficult to disclose abuse or seek help
- May need consideration of the age, maturity & understanding of the young people involved in sexual activity to decide if it seems appropriate

What to do next:

If the victim or perpetrator is under 18 years old, consider referral to Children's Social Care:

- If under 16 they **must** be referred to Social Care
- If 16 or over, complete a DASH and contact the Domestic Abuse Helpline; if assessed as high risk will be referred to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

In an emergency call 999

A Domestic Abuse Traffic Light Tool has been developed to help professionals consider the risks to young people from domestic abuse.

If the young person is 16 years or over this should be used in conjunction with the DASH.

Young people of any age can be referred for support to local services - see the Sheffield Young People and Domestic Abuse Pathway.

Be aware that an LGBT+ person accessing domestic abuse services will have to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Creating a safe and accessible environment where victims feel they can do this and using gender neutral terms such as partner or ex-partner is essential.

Community Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) workers provide long term advocacy, support & service co-ordination for victims of domestic abuse.

Community IDVA workers also take the voice of the victim to MARAC & inform them of the outcomes.

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Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment & 'Honour-Based' Abuse (DASH) Risk Assessment, May 21:

- Helps identify the levels of risk & offer appropriate services and safety planning
- Should be completed with young people (aged 16 & over) & adults disclosing domestic abuse, stalking, harassment & honour-based violence

Sheffield Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) comprises representatives of statutory and voluntary sector agencies who discuss all high-risk cases of domestic abuse to:

- Protect victims & their children
- Reduce serious harm and homicide

MARAC enables agencies to work together, improve accountability through action planning, and provides support for staff working with high risk domestic abuse cases.

MARAC will:

- Accept referrals from any agency who have assessed the case as **high risk** using the DASH risk assessment
- Hear the views of the victim through an IDVA worker (if the victim is working with the service)
- Share relevant & appropriate information
- Agree actions to reduce risk & promote the safety & well-being of the victim, children and other adults at risk
- Provide professional support to reduce the risk of further harm

Education settings can talk to the **Sheffield Domestic Abuse Helpline, tel. 0808 808 2241** for advice about support for someone involved in domestic or relationship abuse.

If the situation is suspected to be high risk, the IDVA worker may talk to you about completing a Domestic Abuse, Stalking & Harassment Risk Assessment (DASH).

If you are worried that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm a referral must be made to Children's Social Care immediately tel. 0114 273 4855.

If a case is due to be presented at MARAC involving a child or young person within your setting, the DSL will be sent a request for information.

The DSL must respond immediately as they may have information that is vital to safety planning.

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs):

A DHR takes place to review the death of a person aged 16 or over which appears to have resulted from domestic abuse/violence. The purpose is to:

- Establish what we can learn about how local agencies work to safeguard victims
- Identify what the lessons are, timescales for action and what is expected to change
- Apply these lessons e.g. through changes to agency responses, policies and procedures
- Prevent further domestic abuse/violence and homicide through improved and co-ordinated multi-agency working practices.
- Contribute to a better understanding of the nature of domestic abuse/violence
- Highlight good practice

Training:

Training about domestic abuse, risk assessment, DASH and MARAC is available from IDAS.

Follow this link for more information:
Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS)

Useful resources:

- Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures, Domestic Abuse
- **Adult Social Care First Contact tel. 0114 2734908**
- **Sheffield IDAS tel. 0114 2493920**
- Domestic abuse: how to get help, Home Office guidance
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline website
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline, tel.: 0808 2000 247**
- Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS)

Sheffield Domestic Abuse Coordination Team (DACT) resources:

- Leaflets and posters to download: Sheffield Domestic Abuse Coordination Team (DACT)
- For paper copies of leaflets and posters, email**:** dact@sheffield.gov.uk
- Sheffield Young People and Domestic Abuse Pathway
- Young People and Domestic Abuse/Peer on Peer Traffic Light Tool

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Early Help

‘Early help’ is support that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes which can often reduce the chance of a problem getting worse.

It is important that children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues from escalating.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children applies to both early help and child protection.

It is defined as:

- **protecting children from maltreatment**
- **preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development**
- **ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and**
- **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes**

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

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 years.

Early help can prevent further problems from arising and relies on local organisations working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide targeted early help services

Sharing information is key to good assessment and provision of suitable and timely support.

All staff should be aware of their setting’s early help process and understand their role in it.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all education staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- shows signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is privately fostered

Sheffield’s Multi-Agency Support Teams (MAST) can help with advice and provision of early help services:

- MAST: Professionals
- Ask us a question
- **Tel.: 0114 203 7485**

Useful resources:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- SCSP Early Help information
- Family Common Assessment Framework
- Referring your safeguarding concerns

If you are worried that a child or young person may need early help, inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy as soon as possible.

The DSL/D will assess the child and family’s needs using the Family Common Assessment Framework (FCAF), work with them to address those needs, and refer them to other services as appropriate (see ‘Referring your safeguarding concerns’ in the useful resources box above

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Early Help

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Faith & cultural abuses

Honour-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community.

It includes female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

It can also be described as a collection of practices which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

It is important to be aware of this dynamic & additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take e.g. 'honour' based violence might be committed against people who:

- defy parental authority
- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- have sexual relationships before marriage (mostly only women and girls)
- want to leave an arranged marriage
- use alcohol/drugs not endorsed by the cultural/religious belief
- want to get out of being forced into marriage/want leave a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional/acceptable within a particular culture or religion
- are the subject of gossip/rumour (even if untrue) about any of the above

All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) & should be handled & escalated as such.

Forced Marriage:

- Is a crime in England and Wales
- Is marriage without full **and** free consent of one or both parties, i.e. where they don't or can't consent (e.g. due to learning disabilities)
- Is where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used (usually by close family members and the extended family) whether physical, emotional, or psychological
- May include abduction, imprisonment, and/or rape
- Affects mainly girls and young women, although also affects males
- In some extreme cases may result in murder

Breast 'Ironing' or 'Flattening' is the process whereby pubescent girls breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely.

It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction, and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises partial or total mutilation of the external female genitalia or other non - medical injury to the female genital organs.

FGM is illegal in the UK & in October 2015 it became mandatory for teachers, social workers & health professionals to additionally report 'discovered' cases of FGM to the Police.

When FGM involves girls under 18 it is classified as child abuse and has potential for long-lasting harmful physical and psychological consequences.

Girls who are threatened with, or have undergone FGM may withdraw from education, affecting their educational & personal development.

They may feel unable to oppose the wishes of their parents & may suffer emotionally as well as physically.

Faith Abuse (linked to belief in spirit possession):

Common features include the belief that:

- witchcraft exists, including beliefs in demon/devil acting through children, evil eye or djinns, dakini
- the child is the 'victim' of a supernatural force – the abuse is designed to 'save' them by 'driving out the devil' or other evil spirits
- the child may harm, kill or bring misfortune to their parents, family, relatives
- the killing of children or use of their body parts will bring supernatural benefits/produce potent magical remedies (ritual or 'muti' murders)

Abusers may target children that are 'different' e.g. have a disability/learning difficulty, illness; or are exceptionally bright. They may also use belief in magic/witchcraft to make children more compliant when being trafficked for exploitation.

These beliefs are not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community.

Remember: Not all those who believe in witchcraft or spirit possession harm children.

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Faith & cultural abuses

Common Indicators:

- Unusual behaviour (especially after an absence from school or college) including depression, anxiety, aggression, withdrawn etc.
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance, or punctuality
- Fear about forthcoming school/college holidays
- Marks or injuries on the body; reluctance in undergoing normal medical examinations
- Some pupils may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- Educational performance, aspirations or motivation may decline
- Friends report their concerns

HBA & Forced Marriage indicators:

- Absence/persistent absence, not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Being withdrawn from school/college by those with parental responsibility
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school/college
- Being prevented from going on to further/higher education

Breast Ironing indicators:

- Fear of changing for physical activities due to scars showing or bandages being visible

FGM indicators:

The girl's community or country of origin is high risk of FGM plus the girl:

- Has a mother or female relative who has had FGM, or father comes from a risk community
- Is uncomfortable walking, sitting, or standing
- Spends longer than usual in the toilet
- Has frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems; avoids physical exercise
- Has prolonged or repeated absences from the education setting

Or you may overhear references to being cut, closed, circumcised or other terms.

Girls may be most at risk during the summer holiday, so pay particular attention in the summer term, & when girls return in the autumn.

Faith Abuse indicators:

- a child reporting that they are or have been accused of being 'evil', and/or that they are having the 'devil beaten out of them'

What settings should do:

- Talk to pupils/students about these issues professionally & sensitively
- If you are concerned that a pupil/student is at immediate risk of, or has undergone any of these issues, you **must** inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy (DSL/D) **immediately**
- Teachers **must** also report 'discovered' cases of FGM direct to the police by ringing **101**

The DSL/D must:

- Make an **immediate** referral to **The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub**, tel. **0114 2734855** for further investigation with the Police & health services
- Explain to the pupil/student about why they have made a referral (particularly if against their wishes)

Staff should NOT:

- Examine a pupil/student e.g. for injuries, nor take photos of any injuries freely shown
- Ignore what the student has told them or dismiss the need for immediate protection e.g. because they are worried about interfering in a 'cultural or religious' practice
- Decide that it is not their responsibility to follow up the allegation
- Discuss their concerns with the student's family or community, in advance of any enquiries by the police, adult or children's social care

In all situations the pupil should be offered counselling & medical help (if needed) & other involved children should be assessed.

Agencies should work with parents, wider family, community leaders & organisations to prevent & educate about these practices & consequences.

Useful web-links:

- Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual – Harmful Practices, Faith/Culture
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation, HM Govt 2020
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – Procedural Information, HO 2016
- Multi-agency practice guidelines – handling cases of Forced Marriage, HO 2014
- National action plan to tackle child abuse linked to faith or belief, DfE 2012

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First aid & medical conditions

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 sets out requirements that education settings will need to assess and inform staff about:

- The number of first-aiders (trained to paediatric standards if there are pupils under 5 years old)
- Their equipment, accommodation, recording and reporting arrangements

A first-aid assessment should include the likely risks to students, visitors & staff.

Points to consider:

- The size of the setting, and whether it is on split sites or levels
- The location of the setting in relation to the emergency services
- Informing the local **emergency services** in writing of the setting's location and any circumstances that may affect access
- Emergency services should be given clear instructions regarding where and whom to report to on arrival
- Any **specific hazards** or risks on site, e.g. hazardous substances, dangerous tools or machinery, or temporary hazards such as building and maintenance work
- Any specific health needs or disabilities of students and staff
- The age range of students (this can affect the type of first-aid provision and materials required)

All staff and visitors should know how to contact a first aider and locate first aid equipment & facilities.

Procedures should be in place for contacting a student's parents or carers.

The governing body, senior manager or Head Teacher should review the setting's first aid needs at least annually to ensure the provision is adequate and standards are being met.

National guidance:

- First Aid in Schools, DFE 2014
- Health and safety: advice for schools, DfE 2018
- Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, DfE 2017 (updated re Covid 19 disapplication's)
- First Aid at Work, HSE

First-aid personnel:

When considering how many are required you should consider:

- Adequate provision for lunch times and breaks: it is good practice to encourage lunchtime supervisors to undergo first-aid training
- Adequate provision for annual leave and other absences
- First-aid provision for off-site activities, e.g. educational visits, **ensuring adequate provision remains on site**
- Adequate provision for practical areas such as science, technology, home economics and physical education departments
- Provision for 'out-of-school-hours' activities, e.g. sports and clubs
- Agreements with contractors (e.g. meal providers) on joint first-aid provision for their employees
- Provision for trainees working on-site; they have the same status as staff for health and safety purposes
- Agreed procedures for emergencies in isolated areas such as the playing field

At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises at all times when children 5 and under are present, and must accompany said children on outings.

Settings should keep a record of any first-aid treatment given by first aiders and trained appointed persons. This should include:

- The date, time and place of the illness, incident or injury
- The name (and class) of the injured or ill person
- Details of the injury or illness and what first-aid was given
- What happened to the person immediately afterwards (for example, whether they went home, resumed normal duties, went back to class, or went to hospital)
- The name and signature of the first-aider or person dealing with the incident

Some accidents are reportable to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

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First aid & medical conditions

Education settings should ensure that all students with medical conditions are properly supported to have full access to education.

Governing bodies/proprietors have a duty to arrange suitable full-time alternative education for pupils who cannot attend school because of illness.

Children with medical conditions and disabilities are more likely to have safeguarding needs & be vulnerable to abuse, and they may be entitled to an assessment as a 'child in need' (Children Act 1989) from Children's Social Care.

It is a statutory requirement for education settings to ensure that:

- Policies and procedures are in place to meet the health needs of all students, in full partnership with parents, carers and health professionals; & written records of any medication administered are kept
- They are compliant with national guidance (see below).
- The setting, healthcare professional, parents, carers & student agree, if possible about implementing a healthcare plan
- Clear information about roles & responsibilities is given to **all** staff & volunteers about arrangements for the administration of medicines, support & care
- Staff & volunteers know what to do & respond appropriately when they become aware that a student with a medical condition needs help
- Staff receive appropriate training, instruction & guidance prior to being asked to administer medicine, support, or care to students
- Parents & carers' consent should be sought before any medication and care is given
- Students who are competent to manage their own medication and care should be supported to do so with parental consent or if the student is judged to be 'Gillick competent'
- Prescribed controlled drugs must be kept securely (but accessible) in a non-portable container, unless the student is deemed competent & safe to have it in their possession

Parents and carers should:

- Provide the setting with information about their child's medical needs if treatment or special care is required; and be contactable
- Give written consent for the administration of prescribed & non-prescribed medicines by staff
- Give consent before information about a student's health is shared with other staff or other agencies
- Contact a key health worker from the setting to assist, support and advocate understanding around the student's health issues
- Keep the pupil/student at home if acutely unwell or infectious

Emergency situations:

All settings should have arrangements in place for dealing with emergencies for all activities, wherever they take place, including school trips within and outside the UK:

- All emergency medicines must be readily available and clearly marked with the pupil/student's name
- Where possible pupils/students should carry their own medical devices e.g. inhalers, adrenaline pens, blood glucose meters
- All staff & pupils/students should be made aware of the likelihood of an emergency arising and what action to take
- A member of staff should always accompany a pupil/student taken to hospital by ambulance, and should stay until the mother, father or carer arrives

Off-site education or work experience - the setting will:

- Be responsible for pupils/students with medical needs who are educated off-site (see Safeguarding Sheffield Children website, education section, policies & procedures 'Alternative Education Provision')
- Conduct risk assessments before off-site education commences
- Be responsible for ensuring that a work place provider has appropriate health and safety and safeguarding policies in place
- Ensure that parents, carers and students give their permission before relevant medical information is shared with the off-site provider.

National guidance:

- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, DfE 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice, DfE 2015 (updated re link to Covid19 changes)
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, DfE 2013

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Governing Body Role

Governing bodies & proprietors of all schools & colleges are required to safeguard & promote the health, safety and welfare of their pupils under:

- Section 175, Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

Governing bodies & proprietors should:

- have a senior level lead to take **leadership** responsibility for their safeguarding arrangements Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE 18
- ensure compliance with these duties & ensure that policies, procedures & training are effective

The Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) requires that Safeguarding Governors attend Governors Safeguarding Training.

Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy's:

You should appoint a senior leader as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with ultimate responsibility for safeguarding & child protection. This responsibility **cannot** be delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD).

You should appoint one or more DSD's depending on the needs and structure of your setting.

The DSL/D should:

- Complete the same level of SCSP training
- Have this explicit role in their job description (Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021)
- Liaise with the local authority & other agencies
- Provide support to staff during working hours & out of hours or out of term activities
- Attend all SCSP Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Training & other courses
- Update their knowledge & skills regularly via emails, meetings & reading materials
- Follow the guidance about their role in Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield children website

The child or young person's wishes – ensure that:

- All safeguarding assessment and provision takes children and young people's views into account
- There are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback
- Children and young people's wishes and feelings are central to all processes in the setting

Safeguarding policies & procedures:

You must ensure that your setting takes appropriate & timely action to safeguard & promote pupil welfare, including implementing:

- An effective safeguarding policy based on government guidance & SCSP procedures that:
  - reflects the additional barriers for children with special educational needs & disabilities
  - is tailored to the needs of the setting
  - is updated annually
  - is available publicly (e.g. on your website)
- A staff behaviour policy and a code of conduct which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff, and pupil relationships & communication
- A Pupil Behaviour Policy
- A procedure for responding to children missing from education
- Recording more than one emergency contact number for pupils where possible
- 'Safeguarding Induction' for all new staff & volunteers which includes:
  - The above policies
  - Part 1, Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2021
  - The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy

For more information follow this link: Safeguarding Children Induction Pack.

Head Teachers/Principals should ensure these policies & procedures are followed by all staff.

Peer abuse:

Peer abuse can include verbal comments & bullying, sexual violence & harassment, physical harm, sexting, initiation rituals and violence.

All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers, and be clear about their setting's policy, which should include:

- How to minimise the risk of peer abuse
- Recording, investigating & dealing with allegations
- Clear processes to support the victim, perpetrator, students, families and staff
- Not passing this off as "banter" or "growing up"
- Your setting's approach to dealing with sexting and gender issues (Equality Act 2010)

The School Governance Service

(Learn Sheffield)

Tel: 0114 2507417

Email: governance@learnsheffield.co.uk

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Governing Body Role

Multi-agency working – ensure your setting:

- Follows statutory national guidance Working together to safeguard children, DfE 2018
- Has safeguarding arrangements that incorporate the policies & procedures of the SCSP including assessments and thresholds
- Supplies information for the SCSP to perform its functions, e.g.:
  - Schoolpoint 365, Safeguarding Children Teams
  - Safeguarding Annual Audit from Head Teachers
- Contributes to the provision of co-ordinated, early help for the additional needs of children
- Attends & contributes to Child Protection Conferences & other multi-agency meetings
- Allows access from a child's Local Authority to conduct Children Act 1989 assessments
- Shares information appropriately with other professionals and agencies

Looked after children:

All settings must have a LAC Designated Teacher with the training, qualifications & experience to work with the Virtual School to support & promote the educational achievement of children who are:

- Previously or currently 'looked after'
- Adopted from care
- Under special guardianship or child arrangement orders

…and meet the needs identified in each child's personal education plan.

Relevant staff should:

- Have the skills, knowledge & understanding to keep 'looked after children' (LAC) safe
- Work with all agencies & act promptly
- Have appropriate information about:
  - A child or young person's legal status and contact and care arrangements
  - The level of authority delegated to the carer by the local authority for the child

Teaching about safeguarding:

- Pupils should be taught about safeguarding & online-safety as part of the curriculum & PHSE
- Relationships, sex, and health education has statutory requirements from Sept 20
- IT filters & monitoring systems should not 'over-block' access to important information

The child wishes: ensure that:

- All safeguarding assessment and provision takes children and young people's views into account
- There are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback
- Children & young people's wishes and feelings are central to all processes in the setting

Safer recruitment:

You should prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children & young people by adhering to statutory responsibilities to:

- Check all staff who work with children
- Take proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required
- Appropriately supervise volunteers
- Have written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place
- Ensure that at least one person on an interview panel has undertaken safer recruitment training

You may choose appropriate safer recruitment training and may take advice from the SCSP; but the training should cover the content of Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021

Concerns that staff/volunteers may pose a risk of harm to children, you should ensure that:

- Procedures are in place for concerns or allegations of abuse against staff & volunteers
- Referral is made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (via the LADO request form)
- You follow legal duty to refer to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has/would be dismissed/removed due to safeguarding concerns

Alternative Provision/Pupil Referral Unit (PRU):

You must arrange suitable full-time education:

- from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion
- for pupils who cannot attend because of illness

Governing bodies of maintained schools can send a pupil off-site for education to improve their behaviour:

- Ensure parents/carers are clear about the placement & reviews to discuss progress
- Pupils should have the same amount of education as in a maintained school

The PRU management committee must ensure pupil safety & education & have their needs met. For more information go to: Alternative Provision, DfE 2016

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Governing Body Role

Online safety – you should ensure that:

- Appropriate IT filters & monitoring systems are in place without 'over-blocking'
- Risk assessments consider pupil age range, numbers & frequency of access
- Pupils are taught about online safety
- Online safety is reviewed regularly and in line with the technology used by your setting
- Staff online-safety training is part of the setting's overarching safeguarding approach

Safeguarding training - follow SCSP guidance:

- Safeguarding induction, including online safety, for all new staff & volunteers
- 'Basic/whole-school' SCSP training every 3 years
- Regular DSL/D updates e.g. via email & staff meetings to develop skills & knowledge of issues
- Staff should be encouraged to contribute to safeguarding arrangements and policy

Boarding schools and children's homes:

- Will have additional factors to consider e.g.:
  - Inappropriate pupil relationships
  - Additional potential for peer abuse
  - The impact of significant gender imbalance
  - Other signs of abuse

You should work with agencies & local authorities & comply with the relevant National Minimum Standards and regulations for their sector.

Special educational needs & disabilities (SEND):

Your safeguarding/child protection policy should reflect additional barriers that exist for SEND children, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of abuse relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- The potentially disproportionate impact of e.g. bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties
- Being more prone to peer group isolation
- The need for extra pastoral support

Sheffield Safeguarding Annual Audit:

- Head Teachers & Governing Body **must** report annually to the SCSP via the local authority about how they meet their safeguarding duties
- In Sheffield this must be done via an online template on the 'Phew' website to enable the SCSP to collate information and the setting to develop an action plan
- The Governing Body should scrutinise & challenge the audit before submission

Information sharing:

Be aware of your duties within the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR to hold & process personal information fairly, lawfully, safely & securely.

Recognise the importance of information sharing between local agencies as early as possible to identify and respond to abuse and ensure that:

- Clear processes are in place (Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services, DfE 2018)
- Staff follow all data protection principles above & understand that legislation is not a barrier to sharing or withholding information if this would result in a child being placed at risk of harm
- Where a pupil moves setting, the DSL/D:
  - Considers how & when to share information with the DSL/D at the new setting
  - Transfers the pupils' safeguarding file, separately from the main pupil file, to the new setting immediately & securely & confirmation of receipt is obtained
- All DSL/D's & SENDCO's are aware of all pupils transferring into their setting & their support needs
- The Safeguarding Annual Report from Head Teachers is completed & returned to the SCSP

Reasonable force - you should ensure that staff:

- Understand the term 'reasonable force'
- Understand the actions that are acceptable to control or restrain children & young people in different situations
- Are given appropriate training to meet their statutory responsibilities and protect children

Settings should understand that a 'no contact' policy can leave staff unable to fully support and protect their pupils and students.

If responding to incidents involving children with Special Educational Needs, disabilities or medical conditions, staff should:

- Recognise their additional vulnerability
- Consider the duties under the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and the Public Sector Equality Duty

Positive & proactive behaviour support & individual behaviour plans agreed with parents and carers can reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

Related policies, procedures & guidance can be found in the education section and other areas of the Safeguarding Sheffield Children Website

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Information sharing

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding & promoting the welfare of children and young people. In many serious case reviews, it is a key factor when opportunities are missed to keep children safe.

Practitioners are responsible for sharing appropriate information & cannot assume someone else will do it.

Sharing information between practitioners, agencies, the child or young person and their families, is essential to:

- Multi-agency working
- Co-ordinating offers of early help
- Reducing the risk of harm
- Assisting with public protection

Governing bodies should ensure their setting:

- Has a policy that reflects the procedures & practice of the local authority & Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP)
- Supplies information to the SCSP, e.g. your safeguarding team details, via Schoolpoint 365; & the SCSP Safeguarding Annual Audit
- Understands local assessment protocols & the SCSP's Thresholds of Need Guidance
- Attends, supports, and contributes to child protection conferences and plans
- Allows access for children's social care to consider whether to conduct a section 17 or a section 47 assessment
- Informs pupils/students and their families, through a leaflet, website, or prospectus, about how they store & use all their information

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018:

- Place greater significance on organisations being transparent and accountable for their data use
- Require organisations to have comprehensive and proportionate arrangements for collecting, storing, and sharing information
- **Do not prevent, or limit, information sharing to keep children and young people safe.**

To effectively share information:

- Be confident about your processing conditions: safeguarding data is often 'special category personal data' i.e., sensitive & personal
- The Data Protection Act 2018 includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent
- Information can be shared:
  - Legally without consent if a practitioner is unable to or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent; or if to gain consent could place a child at risk
  - Lawfully if to keep a child or individual at risk safe from neglect or physical, emotional, or mental harm, or to protect their physical, mental, or emotional well-being.

The General Data Protection Regulation 2018 reflects the progress of digital technology and the use of social media platforms.

Myth busting:

- **The GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018 are barriers to sharing information:** no, they provide a framework to share appropriately, balancing the rights of the information subject & the need to share their information
- **Consent is always needed to share personal information:** no, e.g. where gaining consent would put a child or young person's safety or well-being at risk. Where possible seek consent & be open & honest about why, what, how and with whom information will be shared. Consent must be explicit and freely given. When sharing with or without consent (see below) or choosing not to share, record the reasons why
- **Personal information collected by one organisation cannot be disclosed to another:** if children are in need or at risk of significant harm, it is unlikely there will be a legal barrier to sharing their personal information; consider which processing condition in the Data Protection Act 2018 is most appropriate for use.
- **The common law duty of confidence & Human Rights Act 1998 prevent personal information sharing:** no, practitioners need to balance this against the effect on individuals at risk if they do not share; sharing with consent is not a breach, without consent requires grounds e.g. the subject/public interest, court order etc.
- **IT Systems are a barrier to effective information sharing:** no, IT systems can be useful in supporting information sharing; however professional judgment is the most essential aspect of multi-agency work, which could be put at risk if organisations rely too heavily on IT systems.

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Information sharing

Seven golden rules:

1. **GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018** and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately
2. **Be open and honest** with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so
3. **Seek advice** from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible
4. **Where possible, share information with consent,** and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure**: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles)
7. **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose

Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services, DfE 2018

Principles:

Use your judgement & organisational procedures to decide what information to share and when and consult your manager if in doubt.

Always consider whether sharing information is needed to safeguard & protect a child.

Necessary and proportionate:

- How much information do you need to release?
- Impact on the subject & third parties
- Share proportionately to need and level of risk

Relevant:

- Only relevant information should be shared
- Only share with those who need it
- Allows others to make informed decisions

Adequate:

- Information should be adequate for its purpose & the right quality to ensure that it can be understood and relied upon

Accurate:

- Accurate & up to date information, clearly distinguishing between fact and opinion
- If historical then this should be explained

Timely:

- Share in a timely fashion to reduce missed opportunities to offer support and protection
- In emergencies you might not seek consent if it causes delays & places a child at increased risk

Secure:

- Share appropriately and securely
- Always follow your organisation's policy on security for handling **any** personal information

Record:

Record all decisions & the procedure followed and whether you decided to share. If shared:

- what you shared, why & who you shared with
- who you discussed your decision with, and if not shared, the reasons why not?

Always review retained information regularly and do not keep longer than necessary.

Useful web links/resources:

- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners, DfE 2018
- Data Protection Toolkit for Schools, DfE 2018

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Mental ill-health

Parental ill-health:

Many parents & carers experience mental ill-health e.g. eating disorders, depression, anxiety, & provide a safe, secure, supportive family environment.

However, mental ill-health can blunt emotions & make a person unresponsive, bizarre or violent.

Parents & carers may neglect their own & their children's physical, emotional & social needs & their children may become 'young carers'.

Stigma can prevent people from asking for support & children may feel responsible or secretive.

Other issues such as domestic abuse, drug or alcohol misuse & social isolation can increase the risks.

Parental mental ill-health - consider:

- Frequency & length of episodes
- Emotional, cognitive, physical, practical impacts of symptoms, illness, medication
- Age, exposure &understanding of child at onset
- Periods of wellness with return of skills and abilities between episodes
- Care plan considers needs of child & parent
- Access to specialist services at key times

Settings should:

- Educate all pupils about mental ill-health through assemblies, PHSE etc.
- Work with the whole family wherever possible
- Share information with all involved agencies
- Consult involved adult mental health professionals & invite to all relevant multi-agency meetings
- Jointly assess & plan with the family & involved services e.g. the Family Common Assessment Framework or Child in Need processes
- Ensure child is supported as a 'young carer'

If you feel that the child is at risk of significant harm, refer your concerns immediately to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub tel. 0114 2734855

Further national & local information:

- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges, DfE June 2021
- Mental Ill-Health, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website

Children & young people's mental ill-health:

- Can be an indicator of abuse or neglect
- May be more impacted by a child's disability
- Should only be diagnosed by trained professionals

Includes:

- Not looking after their emotional or physical needs
- Direct self-harm & depression
- Staying in an abusive relationship
- Taking risks too easily
- Eating distress & addiction

Staff should:

- Be aware of impact of abuse, neglect & trauma on a child's mental ill-health, behaviour & education
- Observe & identify worrying behaviour & speak to DSL/D immediately
- Always take self-harm/suicidal thoughts seriously
- Support, respect, understand, and don't judge

Settings must have process to identify mental ill-health, support, refer & record actions

Specialist agencies can advise about support & positive health, wellbeing and resilience resources.

Children with suicidal thoughts:

- Check if they have taken any substances or injured themselves & if so identify urgent medical attention even if they appear well
- Ask what is troubling them, the extent any self-harm is likely or planned, help required

Information sharing:

Informed consent should be sought if the young person is competent unless:

- The situation is urgent and there is no time
- Seeking consent may cause serious harm or is linked to serious crime

If consent is refused/not sought, share information if:

- Risk of serious harm or link to serious crime
- Risk greatly outweighs harm caused by sharing
- There is a pressing need to share the information

A competent young person can limit the information shared about them if there is no risk of serious harm or link to serious crime.

A young person who threatens or self-harms & is caring for a child or pregnant, must be referred to Children's Social Care to assess the needs of both the young person and the child/unborn baby.

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Mental ill-health

Parental ill-health - protective factors:

The child has:

- Support of family, friends, staff, others
- Self–esteem, security, worth, confidence, age-appropriate independence
- Understanding of own strengths and limitations
- At least one secure relationship
- Positive education & community experiences
- Good attendance & achieves as expected
- Opportunity to read & play alone & with others
- Information about illness, events & interventions
- Contact details in the event of a crisis
- Social skills, coping strategies, intelligence, problem solving abilities
- Regular medical and dental checks

The parent or carer has:

- Ill-health, which is mild, short-lived, stable
- Help from parent, family, carer, friend
- No other family difficulties
- Complied well with treatment & advice
- Modelled appropriate emotion and interaction
- Provided appropriate guidance & boundaries
- Supported child's individuality, race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability
- Provided appropriate dress, hygiene, care
- Accepted support from friends, family, services

The family home provides:

- Stability & attachment to the primary carers
- A positive daily routine for the child
- Good family, friends, community relationships
- A place for the child to invite friends to
- Sufficient income and good physical standards
- Supportive siblings, family members and friends

Safeguarding Adults:

If concerned about an adult inform your DSL/D immediately - they can seek advice from:

- **Adult Safeguarding tel. 0114 2736870**
- **Adult Access Team tel. 0114 2734908**
- **South Yorkshire Police tel. 101**

Ring 999 in an emergency

Parental ill-health - indicators of risk:

The child is/has:

- Featured in parent/carers harmful thoughts, delusions, obsessive behaviours, suicidal plans
- Targets of parent/carers aggression or rejection
- Profoundly neglected
- Very young & mother has mental ill-health or personality disorder
- Age-inappropriate young carers
- Witnessing harmful adult behaviours
- Unsupervised contact with unwell parent/carer
- Unable to explain what's happening at home
- Feeling unloved, frightened, inhibited, anxious
- Poor attachments and/or socially isolated
- Bed-wetting, self-harming, emotional problems
- Thinks they will be mentally ill in later life
- Embarrassed by parent/carers behaviour/beliefs
- Going missing from home or education
- Becoming involved in criminal behaviour
- Misusing alcohol or drugs
- Using online media unsafely

Parent or carer is/has:

- Experiencing undiagnosed or untreated illness
- Unaware of the child's emotional needs
- Affecting child's development & understanding
- Violent, unpredictable, or chaotic
- Emotionally inappropriate, unavailable, rejecting child, negative, over-protective, unreasonable expectations
- Unable to provide basic care due to finance
- Experiencing or has a history of domestic abuse
- Non-compliant with services & treatment
- Misusing drugs, alcohol and/or medication
- Exhibiting severe eating disorders or self-harm
- Lacking insight into impact of ill-health on child
- Having compulsory admissions to hospital
- Experiencing relationship difficulties, social isolation, poor support
- Involved in criminal offending

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Missing from education, home, or care

Children missing education:

All children between the age of 5 & 16 years must be in full time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude & special educational needs.

Local authorities identify children living in their area who are not on a school roll, being suitably educated at home, privately or in alternative provision.

Staff should be aware of safeguarding concerns linked to missing children such as exploitation, travel to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

Some circumstances can leave children at greater risk of missing education, including those who are:

- In Gypsy, Roma, & Traveller communities
- Involved in the youth justice system
- Living in a refuge or fleeing domestic abuse
- Part of a homeless family
- Young runaways or missing children
- Asylum seekers, refugees, new migrant families
- Teenage mothers
- Excluded from or not attending school
- Known to early intervention service

Ofsted recommends that all schools should:

- Keep travellers on roll at their 'base school' whilst travelling
- Follow agreed procedures for exclusions
- Communicate with the Local Authority about absence, exclusion & removing pupils from role
- Have safeguarding policies that emphasise missing children and their potential vulnerability
- NOT advise pupils to stay home without official exclusion - it is unlawful & places the pupil at risk

Children Missing from Education Team

Level 5 West Wing, Moorfoot, S1 4PL

Tel: 0114 2736462 Fax: 0114 2735470

Email: ed-missingchildren@sheffield.gov.uk

- Identify, monitor & locate all school-aged children & young people not on a school roll
- Work with all agencies to ensure that missing pupils are promptly re-engaged with education
- Implement procedures to locate pupils who leave the city with an unknown destination

Schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without permission for 10 school days or more, see:

Children Missing from Education, DfE 2016

Mid-year starters & leavers:

All schools must inform the local authority of children who start or leave the school mid-year. This must be done via Anycomms+ (secure email) in Sheffield.

Schools **must** send a Children Missing Education Team (CMET) Referral Form if they intend to remove a pupil from their admission register and obtain written confirmation from CMET before this is done.

Pupils can only be removed if they meet one of the 15 prescribed grounds by the DFE, which include:

- Registered at another school
- Subject to a school attendance order that has been changed or revoked
- Taken out of school for home education
- Moved too far away to travel to school
- Had more than 20 days unauthorised absence or not returned following agreed leave of absence, & the school/Local Authority cannot locate them
- Health problems that prevent attendance whilst of compulsory school age or they have died
- Had a custodial sentence of over 4 months
- Permanently excluded

Missing from education, home, care resources:

- Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care, DfE 2014
- South Yorkshire Missing from Home or Care Protocol 2020
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- Missing Young People's Service, Futures, Star House
- Sheffield Procedures for Responding to Children who go Missing from Home or Care (July 2019) (RMFHC Protocol)
- Referring a safeguarding concern to Children's Social Care

Elective Home Education (EHE):

Where a parent/carer intends to remove a child from school to educate at home, the Local Authority, school, & other key professionals must work with parents/carers to ensure they have considered what is in the best interests of the child.

This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker, see Elective home education, DfE 2019

In Sheffield you should contact your link Attendance and Inclusion Officer to discuss this further & ensure parents are making an informed decision for their child. Alternatively you can securely email: sheffieldinclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk

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Missing from education, home, or care

Missing Children definition (DfE, 2014):

Young runaway: a child who has run away from their home or care placement or feels they have been forced or lured to leave

Missing child: a child reported as **missing** to the police by their family or carers

Around 100,000 children go missing each year in the UK & 25% are thought to be at risk of harm, e.g.:

- Running from e.g. abuse or neglect
- Going somewhere they want to be
- Coerced to run by someone else
- Criminal and/or sexual exploitation
- Drug and alcohol misuse

Although 'looked after children' are particularly vulnerable, most children go missing from their family home & the same measures are required to protect both groups of children.

Police definitions:

Missing: whereabouts unknown, out of character, may be subject of crime or risk of harm to themselves or another; risk levels:

- **high** = immediate risk, child or public in danger through vulnerability or serious crime, immediate deployment of resources
- **medium** = risk/threat to themselves or others; active, measured response to trace & support

Absent: whereabouts known but not where expected/required to be; low risk, Police record details, regularly review, agree ongoing actions

In South Yorkshire no child or young person will defined by Police as 'absent' & low risk.

It is rare for a child to go missing for long - they can be considered missing after e.g. 10 minutes, as this all it takes to be exploited online.

Parents & carers may not report their child as missing due to fear of social care or police involvement or they may feel judged and blamed.

The South Yorkshire Missing from Home or Care Protocol 2020 explains what agencies must do when a child goes missing, independent return home interviews and strategy meetings.

The Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) ensures that agencies work effectively together to assess & respond to risk, & monitor the local protocol, agency reports & data analysis.

If a child is missing ring The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub 0114 2734855 immediately

When a child is found:

- Be supportive, actively listen, respond to needs
- Police Prevention Interview (previously called safe and well checks) - has child suffered harm, where & who they have been with, disclosure of offending by or against them
- Independent return interview within 72 hours - identify, understand & address harm, reasons for going missing, help feel safe, provide information

Assessment:

- individual & family circumstances
- motivation for running away
- potential destinations and associates
- circumstances of being found or returned
- individual vulnerabilities
- frequency of episodes & pattern of absence
- hurt or harm while missing
- known or suspected risk of sexual exploitation or trafficking, involvement in criminal activity or drugs
- contact with people posing risk to children

If a child is taken into police protection, they must be moved as soon as possible into local authority accommodation.

16- and 17-year olds:

- Are no less vulnerable & are equally at risk, particularly of sexual exploitation & gangs
- If they present as homeless, local authority children's services must assess their needs & provide accommodation as needed.

Children who repeatedly go missing:

- Not 'normal' - could indicate abuse or exploitation
- Offer further support and guidance
- Review previous actions
- Consider alternative strategies
- Local longer-term help & support including while child away from home or care if appropriate
- Information sharing essential between agencies

Useful resources on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children website:

- Missing children & young people
- Contextual safeguarding
- Criminal exploitation
- Sexual exploitation
- Referring a safeguarding concern to Children's Social Care

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Online-safety & risk assessment

Safeguarding children & young people online involves a range of issues e.g. cyberbullying, pressure to look 'right' & get 'likes', fake news, violence, extremist behaviour, grooming, child sexual & criminal exploitation, gambling and sharing semi/nude images.

Settings need to educate pupils, parents, carers & staff about the benefits and risks of using this environment and provide safeguards and awareness for users to safely control their online experiences.

Education settings must ensure:

- Safe & secure network & broadband connection
- Compliant Information Communication Technology (ICT) security e.g. firewalls, access restrictions
- Online-safety policies understood, implemented, reviewed by staff, pupils, parents & carers
- Staff, pupils, parents/carers use ICT responsibly
- A progressive, inclusive online-safety curriculum
- Relationships, Sexual Health Education (RSHE) includes online-safety issues

All settings should have:

- A trained Online-Safety Coordinator who is also a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy
- An Online-Safety Policy that reflects your whole-school approach (above) including:
  - Using mobile devices, social media, smart technology
  - Acceptable ICT use for staff & pupils
  - Pupil and staff behaviour including bullying
  - Data protection, information sharing & security
  - Filtering and monitoring
  - Safe home-learning for pupils & staff

The Online-Safety Coordinator is responsible for:

- Undertaking SCSP Online-Safety Training
- Safeguarding students online & assessing the needs of students who may be at risk
- Supporting, training, educating staff/parents/carers

Communication with pupils, staff, parents, carers should include:

- Rules for online-safety & internet access in all areas of the setting
- Articles about online-safety in setting newsletters, publicity, website etc.

Pupils, staff, parents, carers should be able to:

- Access & fully understand your age-appropriate Online-Safety & Acceptable Use Policies
- Use the internet appropriately & know their use can be monitored & traced to individual users
- Monitor children's social media use, especially if they are young or particularly vulnerable

Pupils should be taught:

- to evaluate the content of online information e.g. whether representations of body image are photo-shopped or air-brushed
- To question who a person really is
- How other people portray their lives online
- How to spot fake news
- How to disengage and control their internet use

Managing risk - settings should:

- Take reasonable precautions to prevent pupil & staff access to inappropriate sites or material
- Maintain an audit of all ICT & social media use
- Teach pupils about responsible & safe use of the internet and what to do when things go wrong
- Ensure staff check sites & links before pupil usage
- Ensure all online platforms used to communicate with pupils & their families (e.g. learning online at home) are fully risk-assessed & monitored
- Ensure all staff & pupils are aware of & can access a clear reporting process for online-safety issues
- Ensure their Acceptable Use & Online-Safety Policies considers how all technology, online environments & mobile devices communicate, access social networks, music, videos & gaming sites, take photographs & record videos
- Carefully manage images & other identifying information about students, obtain full consent before use, & delete images when student leaves

It is a crime to:

- Harass or bully via text, email, or phone call
- Create, possess, distribute indecent images of child even with consent or if self-generated
- For an adult to have sexual communication with a child under 16 years

The age of criminal responsibility is 10 years.

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Online-safety & risk assessment

Cyber-bullying can make children feel scared, upset, isolated & vulnerable, particularly as it can happen whilst alone and/or in their own home e.g.:

- Messages, texts, emails, photographs, video's, sexting, to individuals or groups
- Communicating threats, upset, offence, often with racist, sexist, or homophobic content
- Humiliating or abusive phone calls
- Inappropriate communication shared through social networking & gaming sites
- Encouraging other people to bully the victim
- Setting up fake profiles to make fun of someone
- Creating a false identity to send inappropriate communications in someone else's name
- Using chat rooms & gaming sites to threaten, abuse, lock out, &/or spread rumours
- Send viruses or hacking programs to harvest information or destroy someone's game/device
- Posting intimate, sensitive, personal information without someone's permission or knowledge

An adult may pretend to be someone online to befriend, obtain sensitive information or materials & threaten to expose information to the child's family or friends if they do not do as they say.

4 key concerns:

- **Content** – harmful material or ideas e.g. racist, pornographic, bullying, sexual, homophobic
- **Contact** – who interacting with online, are they encouraging student to do something harmful?
- **Conduct** – online behaviour e.g. making, sending, receiving explicit images, bullying, gambling
- **Commerce** – e.g. online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing, financial scams

Cybercrime is criminal activity using computers and/or the internet including:

- **Hacking:** unauthorised access to computers
- **Booting:** denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks
- **Malicious software:** making/supplying/obtaining viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets & Remote Access Trojans

If pupils have strayed into cyber-dependent crime – the DSL/D can refer them to Cyber Choices.

Youth gambling:

- 17% of under 16's gambled online in last 7 days
- Through adverts, apps, influencers, gaming
- Teach about gambling issues via the curriculum

Head Teachers & staff have powers to search pupils & their possessions, see:

- **'Reasonable force, searching & screening, Sept 21'** in **education policies, procedures & guidance**, on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children website.

Other issues:

- Taking a photograph without consent is an invasion of privacy & may be distressing
- Once photos are sent to a device, network, or website they are impossible to fully track or delete
- Giving out any personal information (including photos) could put someone at risk of harm
- Location tracking services allow any individual to identify the location of people & devices

Useful links:

- Safeguarding Sheffield Children website: Online Safety
- Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Procedures - Online Safety
- UK Safer Internet Centre
- Screening, Searching & Confiscation: advice for schools, DfE 2018
- Safeguarding and remote education
- NSPCC NetAware
- Preventing Bullying, DfE
- NSPCC: Sexting
- Thinkuknow
- YGAM
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, UKCIS, Dec 20

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Online-safety & risk assessment

Risk-assessing unsafe internet use

- **Never publicise 'unsafe' sites** as it encourages people to look & implies other sites are 'safe'
- If child/parent/carer has already accessed a worrying site or there are other online-safety concerns, use the table below to assess their needs

Child or young person's level of need:

Universal	Universal plus/partnership plus	Targeted/acute/specialist
• Has a range of IT skills and understands how the internet works and its global audience • Safely enjoys the benefits of the internet and can communicate safely with friends and family • Maintains personal security when using chat rooms, gaming etc. • Does not disclose personal details of friends to unknown parties • Family aware of use and understand safe use principles • Child shares interest with parents	• Some IT skills but doesn't really understand how the internet works • Uses the internet carelessly, visiting unregulated sites • Visits adult sites and views explicitly sexual or violent material • Is the victim or perpetrator of occasional low level cyber-bullying • Has IT skills but using them to access unsuitable areas of the internet • Uses the internet to establish contact with unknown others and discloses contact details • Transmits pictures/video of self or others which could be used by internet predator or for cyber bullying • Discloses address and phone details • Agrees to meet stranger with peer(s)	• Visits illegal sites or sites designed for adults and develops an interest which may lead to criminal or exploitative actions • Exposes friends to risk by disclosing details to strangers • Posts explicitly sexual/ violent material including photos/ video of self or others • Discloses stranger abuse resulting from internet contact • Is the victim or perpetrator of sustained and/or serious cyber-bullying that includes disclosure of personal and identifying information • Agrees to meet stranger alone

Action from practitioners:

• Child is benefiting from parental guidance and curriculum activity • Continue discussion about online safety in the curriculum	• Parents/carers & setting provide advice & consider next steps • Parents and carers are given advice as needed • Age appropriate access controls are put in place • Discuss with DSL/D in setting • Consider an action plan with parents/carers • Consider an FCAF to assess family needs	• Inform DSL/D immediately • Notify police • Inform parents/carers if safe to do so • If parents/carers may be part of the risk or if a crime may have been committed, **do not inform them before** you discuss with The Hub • **If a child/young person is at risk of significant harm refer them immediately to The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel. 0114 2734855** • Notify other parents/carers if appropriate • Ensure other involved practitioners are aware of your concerns provide support

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Peer abuse & risk assessment

Peer abuse is the physical, emotional & sexual abuse of a child or young person by their peers on or offline:

- Bullying, including prejudice & discrimination
- Cyberbullying & youth-produced sexual imagery
- Sexual violence, harassment, comments, jokes, non-consensual sexual activity
- Non/consensual sharing of nude & semi-nude images and/or videos
- Abuse in intimate personal peer relationships
- Up-skirting (photographing genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification and/or victim distress)
- Physical abuse & assault (or threats to harm)
- Initiation & hazing rituals, humiliation & violence

Bullying can occur at any time, inside or outside a setting & should always be assessed by your safeguarding team if it involves one of your pupils.

Peer abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other differences
- Result in significant, long-lasting, and traumatic isolation, intimidation, or violence to the victim.

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Domestic abuse or child abuse at home
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical harm and should be taken equally seriously.

Multi-agency approach:

All agencies have responsibilities to the victim & the alleged perpetrator; but the victims is paramount.

Separate management & assessment of the victim & alleged perpetrator is essential & should consider the:

- Nature and extent of the abusive behaviour, using expert professional advice if required
- Context of the behaviour including unmet developmental and behavioural needs
- Their family & social circumstances
- Risk to self & others, e.g. immediate & extended family, school, peer group or wider social network

Education settings should:

- Have an ethos where students & staff are respectful & understand the effect of their actions
- Openly discuss any issues that could motivate bullying with staff and students
- Address issues early between pupils which might later provoke conflict
- Address all inappropriate behaviour to prevent future problematic, abusive or violent behaviour
- Develop strategies to help to prevent bullying
- Involve students & parents to ensure they know what to do to prevent & report concerns
- Create an inclusive, safe environment where pupils can openly discuss issues without fear
- Help staff understand needs of SEND, disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender pupils
- Work with the wider community & agencies to tackle issues that occur outside the setting

Your peer abuse policy should explain:

- peer abuse **IS** abuse & should **never** be tolerated
- procedures to minimise the risk of peer abuse
- how allegations will be investigated & dealt with
- the different forms this abuse can take
- how parents, students, staff respond quickly
- how victims/perpetrators are assessed/supported
- regular evaluation and updating
- resources available to help with problems
- staff training about indicators, identification & response to peer abuse, including sexual violence & harassment, & their statutory responsibilities
- clear process for pupils to report bullying & abuse & be assured that they will be listened to, taken seriously, kept safe, not made to think they are creating a problem and incidents will be acted on
- that disciplinary process will be applied fairly, consistently, reasonably, considering any special educational needs, disabilities, & vulnerability

Staff should:

- discuss all concerns (even if no complaint) with their DSL/D, who will then assess each case
- challenge all inappropriate behaviours
- not downplay behaviours as ‘banter’, ‘having a laugh’, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”

Peer abuse can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children & young people and at worst a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

The Peer Abuse Risk Assessment guidance below will help the DSL/D to consider all aspects of the incident & decide what further action is needed.

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Peer abuse & risk assessment

Taking action:

- Always take complaints seriously
- Never ask a student for a written statement, it can interfere with a criminal investigation
- Assess needs of victim and perpetrator
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting
- Record all incidents and all action taken

Sexual violence & harassment:

Incidents are likely to be complex & require difficult professional decisions alongside other agencies.

The DSL/D should:

- Report all concerns about sexual violence to Children's Social Care and/or the Police and complete a risk assessment
- Discuss how the alleged perpetrator will be informed and any next steps with children's social care and/or the police
- Risk-assess all reports of sexual harassment and considered if a referral to Children's Social Care or the Police is required
- Record all risk assessments and keep a copy on the individual safeguarding file for the victim and alleged perpetrator
- Regularly review & update the risk assessment with assessments from other professionals
- Liaise with the social worker, police officer or other involved practitioners as required
- The police should advise the setting about the investigation e.g. if alleged perpetrator is 'released under investigation', 'no further action' is taken, they are given bail, cautioned, or convicted

Risk assessment & safety planning:

This is the responsibility of the DSL, fulfilling the organisation's 'duty of care' to all people using the setting.

The purpose is to decide whether to re/admit a pupil with concerning behaviour & plan for the safety of the alleged/abuser, their alleged/victim, and others at the setting.

Risk assessment identifies the impact of:

- alleged/abuser & victim being educated at the setting & around other people
- Of using strategies to minimise identified risks, help staff to respond clearly & reduce risks to a manageable level

Settings should follow the education settings 'Information Sharing' policy in Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website) to ensure sensitive & appropriate communication with other agencies.

All agencies should agree how to communicate with the alleged/victim, alleged/abuser, parents/carers, staff & pupils, whilst ensuring that this does not prejudice any investigation and maintains individual confidentiality.

Process - risk assessments should be:

- recorded and included on the child's safeguarding file (& linked to SEND file if appropriate)
- regularly reviewed e.g. through TAF or other meetings, and updated with any changes

A risk assessment should consider information from all agencies about:

- ☐ What the concerning behaviour is
- ☐ When & why the alleged/abuser may have behaved this way e.g. warning signs & triggers
- ☐ Any cultural context for the behaviour
- ☐ Related issues e.g. child exploitation, disability, abuse & neglect, substance/alcohol misuse
- ☐ Any language & interpretation needs of the alleged abuser/victim & their families to ensure full understanding of the safeguarding issues
- ☐ Age & understanding of alleged/abuser/victim
- ☐ Previous education experiences of the alleged/abuser (e.g. relationships, attainment)
- ☐ Views of parents/carers/family, their response, anxieties, level of cooperation/compliance
- ☐ Alleged/abusers' cooperation, responsibility taken, understanding of allegations & victim's viewpoint
- ☐ Impact of social media
- ☐ Positive and negative friendship groups inside & the setting and in the community
- ☐ Mapping others at risk at the setting e.g. people related to concerns e.g. alleged/victim's siblings
- ☐ Alleged/abusers' capacity to change, resilience, goals, attitudes, opportunities, engagement, participation
- ☐ Therapeutic support & other assessments from agencies & whether outcome has been positive
- ☐ Training needed to develop staff safeguarding & other skills e.g. behavioural understanding, disability, SEN, Team Teach

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Peer abuse & risk assessment

Conclusions of DSL/D risk assessment:

Manage internally:

- victim & alleged perpetrator not in need of early help or statutory intervention
- incident can be dealt with through e.g. behaviour policy & pastoral support

Early help:

- victim and/or alleged perpetrator may benefit from early help e.g. to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour & prevent escalation

Referral to Children's Social Care:

- victim has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger
- A young perpetrator should also be referred and should be the subject of a child protection conference if considered to be at continuing risk of significant harm
- setting informs parents/carers unless doing so will put child at additional risk
- DSL/D & social workers coordinate support for victim, alleged perpetrator & other children
- Setting actions do not jeopardise a statutory investigation
- If children's social care decide statutory intervention is not appropriate, DSL/D should:
- refer again if they believe child remains at risk of harm
- re-consider early help, specialist & pastoral support

Safety planning:

This considers risk reduction & should include agreed measures & interventions to support the alleged/abuser & alleged/victim effectively e.g.:

- Writing a behaviour management plan, or a MyPlan, EHC Plan, which addresses current and future behaviour, likelihood, and impact
- Internal support interventions for situations that the alleged/abuser/victim identifies as difficult
- Assessment of related safeguarding needs e.g. though an FCAF for alleged/abuser/victim
- Discussion & advice for practitioners to develop support for the alleged/abuser/victim
- Referrals for the alleged/abuser/victim e.g. restorative justice, mental health support, Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, Community Youth Team, Speech & Language, Educational Psychologist
- Support & monitoring arrangements for alleged/abuser/victim and their families
- Frequency of contact between the child and family and supporting agencies
- Agreeing what work will be done by each practitioner
- Process for sharing information with agencies & the family e.g. Team Around the Family or other meetings
- What to do if the child goes missing e.g. monitoring attendance, staff contact
- Searches for weapons/substances/phones (see 'Reasonable Force' in Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website)
- Clarity for the alleged/abuser/victim about un/acceptable behaviour & consequences in and outside the setting

If child/young person is at risk of or suffering significant harm, immediately ring:

- **Police tel. 999 and/or**
- **Children's Social Care tel. 0114 2734855**

Useful links and resources:

- SCSP Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2019
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, DfE 2017
- Bullying UK
- Childline (NSPCC) tel.: **0800 1111**
- Stonewall - various resources
- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre
- Peer Abuse information, NSPCC

Other related policies & guidance are available on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children website:

- Education > Toolkit: Education settings safety plan, Sept 21
- Professionals & volunteers > Information & resources: Sexualised Behaviour, Child Exploitation, Bullying, Peer Abuse etc

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Photographs, video's & images

Whilst it is important that children & young people have photographs & films of special moments, the increasing use of digital technology presents a number of risks for children, young people and their families, mainly due to the way it is used rather than the technology itself.

Safeguarding issues must be considered when taking & using images of children, young people, and staff, e.g. if they have fled from domestic abuse their whereabouts may be revealed to an abusive partner.

Some people simply do not want their images to be publicly available.

Steps that must be taken:

- You must get the informed, signed consent of everyone appearing in the photograph, video, and image, including staff and the parents and carers of pupils, before it is created
- Young people may be able to give consent themselves if they are considered able to make an 'informed' choice
- If you believe a young person is making an informed choice, always check with your DSL/D to see if there are safeguarding issues that the young people themselves are unaware of or may not have considered
- No images of a looked after child should be created or used without prior written & signed consent from their social worker and Local Authority
- Never use full names or other personal details of the subject of any image you use as children may become vulnerable to grooming
- Always be clear about the purpose & audience for the image
- If you use images from another agency, you need to check that agency has obtained informed consent
- Only use secure equipment provided by your setting to take, store, and download images – never use your personal devices
- When an image is transferred to your workplace network they should be erased immediately from their initial storage location
- Be careful about using images of children in swimming costumes or other revealing clothing due to the potential for misuse of images
- Always destroy images once consent has expired or the child or young person has left your setting
- Never take images of a child's injury or an audio recording of a disclosure, even if requested by children's social care

CCTV and webcams:

- Are they sited where they may compromise the privacy of individuals, e.g. toilet or changing areas?
- Have you displayed clear signs that they are in operation?

Images:

- Are your display boards seen by the public?
- May be shared online, copied, downloaded, screenshotted, adapted & used inappropriately
- May appear in internet search results
- May become owned by the platform once posted and then licensed for e.g. commercial purposes
- Become a part of a child's public image which may affect them later e.g. job applications
- Have you demonstrated an inclusive approach by including images of people of different ethnicity or disability?
- Have you checked any copyright implications?

All settings need a policy about taking & publishing images during events and activities and what actions you take to keep children safe.

This policy must be available & understood by pupils (as appropriate) parents, staff & volunteers.

The press are exempt from the Data Protection Act.

If you invite them to your premises or event you need to obtain prior consent from all staff, parents and carers involved.

Family members can take photos of their child in school activities. Photos taken for personal use by family members are not covered by the Data Protection Act.

Useful links/resources:

- Data Protection: Gov.uk
- SCSP Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures: Online Safety
- Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website
- Safeguarding Sheffield Children website: Online Safety
- Searching, screening and confiscation; Advice for Head Teachers, school staff & governing bodies, DfE 2018
- Taking Photo's in Schools, Information Commissioners Office

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Preventing extremism & radicalisation

The 'Prevent' duty:

All education settings must try to prevent children & young people from being drawn into extremism and/or terrorism.

Extremism is defined as:

Opposition to fundamental values, e.g. democracy, law, liberty, respect & tolerance of other faiths & beliefs; that can be used to sow division on the basis of race, faith, denomination; to justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior etc.

It includes e.g. far right views, animal rights activism and religious fundamentalism.

Protecting students from these risks is similar to protecting them from harm and abuse.

The Prevent programme must not involve any covert activity against people or communities. However, specified authorities may need to share personal information, e.g. to ensure that a student at risk of radicalisation is given appropriate support.

Factors making students vulnerable include:

- Pressure from peers & others or the internet
- Crime against them or involvement in crime
- Anti-social behaviour and bullying
- Family tensions
- Race or hate crime
- Lack of self-esteem or identity
- Personal or political grievances

Signs to look out for include:

- Isolation
- Fixation on an ideology/belief/subject
- Sense of injustice/grievance
- Subjected to group influence/control
- Seeking identity/meaning/belonging
- 'Them' and 'us' perspective on situations
- Attitudes that justify offending etc.

If you think a student might be at risk:

- Inform your DSL/D immediately
- The DSL/D will assess the needs of the student & family &ensure that they are supported within school & with a 'team around the family' meeting
- Serious concerns must be referred immediately by the DSL/D to Children's Social Care, & may involve Police, other agencies & the Channel Programme

Education settings should ensure:

- They are alert to behaviour which may indicate that a student needs help or protection
- They discuss & challenge ideas via the curriculum, debates, outside speakers, etc.
- They have clear procedures in place to assess & protect students at risk
- Designated Safeguarding Leads & Deputies:
  - undertake mandatory 'Workshop for Raising Awareness of Prevent' (WRAP) training via bookings@learnsheffield.co.uk
  - provide briefings, awareness, advice, and support to staff & volunteers
- Students are safe from terrorist & extremist material when accessing the setting's internet
- They give a **proportionate** response to risk
- They work with all services, e.g. Youth Justice, Social Care, & Community Youth Teams, to ensure the welfare of students, staff & visitors

'Prevent' does not:

- Stop students from debating 'risky' issues
- Require unnecessary intrusion into family life
- Override your legal duties of ensuring freedom of speech within legal boundaries

Be careful that you do not stereotype – any group or community can be drawn to extremist ideas & put a child or young person at risk.

Prevent Single Point of Contact:

Andrew Adedoyin, tel.: **0114 2734855**

Anyone can report a concern in confidence to:

- **Police Prevent Team** tel.: **0114 2523217**
- **Out of hours:** tel.:**101**, or in an emergency **999**
- **Email:** Prevent@southyorks.pnn.police.uk

Useful resources:

- Prevent Duty Guidance, DfE 2019
- Protecting children from radicalisation, DfE 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- ACT campaign
- Terrorism Act 2000
- Channel Guidance, HO 2015
- SCSP Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures

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Private fostering & host families

The Children Act 1989 requires parents, professionals & anyone proposing to privately foster a child under 16, to notify the local authority immediately or within 6 weeks.

Private fostering is when a child under 16 (18 if disabled) is cared for by someone other than a parent, a person with parental responsibility or a close relative, for 28 days or more (including occasional short breaks).

A 'close relative' is a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, step-parent, by marriage/civil partnership.

A 'private' foster carer can be:

- Extended family e.g. a cousin or great aunt
- A friend of the family
- The parent of a friend of the child
- Someone unknown to child/young person's family

How is responsibility shared?

- The private foster carer is responsible for providing daily care & promoting/safeguarding their welfare
- Private foster carer's rights come from the voluntary agreement made with the parent
- Responsibility for the child's welfare remains with the person with parental responsibility

Private foster carers can get support & financial help.

The Sheffield Connected Persons Team will assess the best interests of the child, including:

- listening to what the child wants
- arranging support for the child and the carer
- helping carer to apply to be a private foster carer
- ensuring cultural, linguistic, religious needs met
- undertake regular visits to see the child & carer
- signpost to other agencies as necessary

If the arrangement is deemed unsuitable, decisions will be made to safeguard the child's welfare.

Why are children in private foster care?

- children from abroad living with extended family
- host families for language schools
- parental ill-health
- parents move but student stays to finish exams
- teenagers estranged from their families
- children brought to the UK for adoption
- children at independent boarding schools placed with host families for holidays
- trafficked children

Host families & 'homestay':

If a parent or student arranges the homestay, this is not a fostering arrangement.

If a setting arranges exchange visits (even if via a company), consider the safety of all pupils who are in the home of a family to whom they are not related.

Adults providing the care are in 'regulated activity' and your setting is the 'regulated activity provider'.

UK homestays - you should:

- obtain a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information for all for students under 16
- consider obtaining a DBS enhanced certificate for students over 16, and
- use professional judgement to assess the suitability of the adults who provide the care
- Notify the local authority if the homestay is for 28 days or more

Homestay abroad - you should:

- liaise with partner schools to arrange effective safeguarding of all students involved
- make parents aware of the arrangement
- contact the foreign embassy or High Commission in the country to discuss checks
- Provide pupils with contact details for emergencies or if they feel uncomfortable

Useful web links/resources:

- Private Fostering, Sheffield City Council
- The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005
- www.privatefostering.org.uk
- Private fostering: better information, better understanding, Ofsted 2014
- Children Act 1989 Private Fostering, DfE

To notify the **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub** about a possible private fostering arrangement ring:

0114 2734855

For advice about private fostering, ring the:

Connected Persons Team, tel.: 0114 2736489

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Pupil transitions

Moving between education settings is a hurdle in every pupil's life as friendships & staff change & learning environments, organisations & buildings are replaced.

Pupils move for various reasons e.g. moving house, transfer to a special school, fleeing domestic abuse, eviction, family breakdown, debts, changed immigration status, becoming a 'looked after child', needing residential mental health care/education.

They may arrive mid-term, have no friends, fear bullying, and have had previous moves, and need support to settle & learn.

If a pupil has safeguarding issues, you will need discussions, meetings, plans and reviews between the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) and other involved agencies.

All safeguarding information must be clearly & quickly communicated between DSL/D's at the previous and next setting, particularly if this is an unplanned move.

Communicate by:

- **Telephone discussion** – **do not assume** that the previous setting knows where the pupil has moved to – if you know a pupil is starting with you, you **must** ring the previous setting to check if the pupil has any safeguarding needs
- **Face to face meetings** – to allow staff to thoroughly share information about a pupil's background, current situation, or future risks
- **Secure electronic transfer** – allowing easy and quick transfer of sensitive information between settings

All discussions (including phone calls) should be recorded on the pupil's individual safeguarding file.

Schools can choose when to admit a pupil if this choice is reasonable.

Transgender pupils may move to a new setting as a fresh start. Information about status is 'sensitive personal data' and explicit consent is required before it can be processed.

With their consent you should:

- Identify a staff member in the new setting who will support the transgender student
- Ensure the new setting has prepared for the needs of the student in line with this policy

Useful links:

- Schools & Childcare, Sheffield City Council
- 'Between the Cracks Report' RSA, 2013
- 'Young Person N' Learning brief

Top Tips:

- Prepare the pupil for the change if possible
- Maintain routines & consistent responses
- Involve **all** parents, carers and those with parental responsibility unless there is a good reason not to
- Identify support and changed behaviour
- Share initial safeguarding information quickly by phone between the DSL/D at each setting
- Ensure there is a process for appropriately sharing relevant information received after a pupil has left the setting
- Remember, a child is anyone under **18** years

Admission forms should include:

- Pupil's details e.g. name, gender, date of birth
- Name, address & emergency contact number of parents & adults with parental responsibility
- Where the pupil normally resides
- Date of admission
- Details of last education setting attended

A pupil is the responsibility of the education setting from the first day that they **have agreed or have been notified,** that the pupil will attend.

The document: Every Pupil Matters at… provides a useful summary of a pupil's emotional, physical & social development.

A paper or electronic safeguarding file should be created for every pupil who has a Family Common Assessment, 'Child in Need' status and/or safeguarding/child protection concerns.

- Paper files - transfer **only** by signed for/special delivery post or hand-deliver to the named DSL/D or Head, in the first week at the new setting
- If any sensitive information is transferred electronically it must be done safely & securely & meet data protection security transfer requirements.
- The guidance **'Safeguarding Files'** can be found on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children website here: Education Policies & Procedures

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Reasonable force, searching & screening

Reasonable force describes actions that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils e.g.:

- **Control:** passive or active physical contact
- **Restraint**: hold physically or control
- **Reasonable in the circumstances:** using no more force than needed

Staff should avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not be possible.

Who can use reasonable force?

- All staff have legal power to use reasonable force
- Anyone the Head has temporarily put in charge of pupils e.g. volunteers or parents

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils:

- From hurting themselves or others
- From damaging property
- From causing disorder

The decision is the professional judgement of staff & based on the individual circumstances, e.g. to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom
- prevent a pupil from disrupting an event, trip, visit
- prevent a pupil leaving class if this would risk safety or lead to disruptive behaviour of others
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves

Unacceptable techniques:

- seated double embrace: forcing pupil to sit & lean forward while monitoring breathing
- double-basket: holding arms across chest
- nose distraction: sharp upward jab under nose

It is unlawful for education settings to use force as a punishment.

Physical contact with pupils can be appropriate e.g.:

- walking together at the setting or on a trip
- comforting a distressed pupil
- first aid
- when a pupil is being congratulated or praised
- demonstrating the use of e.g. musical instrument, exercise, or PE/sports coaching

Settings should NOT have a 'no contact' policy; staff have a duty of care to prevent a pupil from causing harm.

Governors should ensure that staff, volunteers, parents, carers & pupils understand your behaviour policy, use of reasonable force & reasonable adjustments for SEND pupils.

Your behaviour policy should include:

- When you would use reasonable force
- How incidents are recorded
- A list of any items banned under your rules

Settings do not require parental consent to use force on a student.

Managing behaviour:

- Risk-assess all situations of pupil disruption
- Develop behaviour management strategies involving parents and carers
- Brief staff & ensure additional support is available

Clarity can reduce the likelihood of complaints when force has been used properly.

Staff training - the Head should consider:

- The needs of the pupils at the setting
- What staff might be expected to do e.g. control, restraint, search & screen

Telling parents & carers when force is used:

You should inform parents about serious incidents involving the use of force, considering the pupil's behaviour, level of risk, degree of force, effect on the pupil or staff & child's age & understanding.

Complaints:

- Thorough, speedy & appropriate investigation
- Suspension must not be automatic
- Follow **'Allegations & concerns about staff & volunteers, Sept 21'** in education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield children website
- Support for staff subject to a formal allegation

The statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, DfE 2017 states that you must always record physical interventions used for a child under 5 years old and inform parents and carers on the same day if practicable.

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Reasonable force, searching & screening

Search & seize powers in education settings

Article 8, European Convention on Human Rights says:

- Pupils have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy
- any interference with this right must be justified and proportionate

Screening:

Schools can, without consent, require pupil screening via a walk-through or hand-held metal detector even if they do not suspect they have a weapon.

Health & safety legislation requires a school not to expose pupils or staff to health and safety risks.

- Any member of staff can screen pupils
- If a pupil refuses, the school can refuse to have them at the setting but give them 'unauthorised' absence rather than exclusion
- Screening without physical contact is **not** subject to the same conditions as search without consent

Power to search pupils:

- Staff can search pupils with their informed consent for any item
- Schools do not require formal written consent from the pupil, verbally agreement is sufficient
- School behaviour policies & communications should make clear what items are banned
- If staff suspect a pupil has a banned item, they can instruct them to turn out their pockets or bag
- If a pupil refuses to co-operate schools can apply an appropriate disciplinary penalty

Searching without consent:

Heads & authorised staff have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions without consent if they suspect they are carrying "prohibited items' e.g.:

- Knives, weapons, fireworks
- alcohol & illegal drugs
- items stolen or used for offence, injury, damage
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- pornographic images

Who can search a pupil?

- staff & witnesses of the same sex as the pupil

..unless there is a risk of serious harm if you do not search immediately and it is not reasonable to summon other staff.

Who is authorised to search?

- Heads decide who to authorise & this does not have to be in writing
- Heads can only require **security** staff to undertake a search
- Staff can be authorised to search for some items but not others
- If the security guard is not employed by the school the person witnessing the search should be a permanent member of staff

Authorised staff (without reasonable force) can:

- Only search for items banned in the rules
- Only search without consent on the premises or where they have lawful control of the pupil
- seize, confiscate, retain, and dispose of items considered harmful or detrimental to discipline

Confiscation:

Staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search and seize any item they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

Offensive weapons, drugs, pornographic images & stolen items must be passed to the police.

Staff who find an electronic device that is prohibited or has or could be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury, damage property, disrupt teaching or break the school rules can:

- Examine any data on the device
- Delete data unless giving it to the police
- Data relating to an offence should not be deleted

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

For further information:

- Use of reasonable force, DfE 2013
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
- Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders (2002)
- Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Pupils with Severe Behavioural Difficulties (2003)
- Searching, screening & confiscation, DfE 2018
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, DfE 2016

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Referring your safeguarding concerns

If you are worried about a child, you **must**:

- Discuss your concerns **verbally** & straight away with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D)
- Write it down & give (or send securely) to the DSL/D to kept in the pupil's safeguarding file

After the initial discussion the DSL/D will check any information at your setting & with involved agencies.

These checks **must not** delay referral of a pupil who is **suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.**

In all safeguarding situations the setting **must** use a professional interpreter (not a family member) who understands safeguarding issues if the family do not speak or understand English well.

Early help:

Informed parental consent is required to complete & share an early help assessment for a child and family.

If the child & family need early help from another agency, the DSL/D can complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) part 1.

If there are multiple needs or if the early help has not had a positive outcome, the DSL/D can complete a Family Common Assessment (FCAF) (or MyPlan or Education, Health & Care Plan) with the parents, carers & any practitioners who are already involved.

The DSL/D should organise Team around the Family (TAF) meetings with the family & involved practitioners to discuss, organise & review support.

The EHA1 & FCAF can be sent **securely** to MAST for further discussion and to help coordinate support.

Child protection concerns:

The DSL/D will refer a child that is 'suffering or likely to suffer significant harm' **immediately** by ringing and speaking to:

- the allocated social worker or their manager, or
- the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel. 2734855 If there is no allocated social worker

Consent is **not** required for referrals of significant harm, but you should inform parents if safe to do so.

The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub:

- will collect information from involved agencies and decide what further action is required
- does not take calls 'for information only' - record such information on your child protection file

DSL/Ds should follow up their referral in writing on a Multi-Agency Confirmation Form (MACF) within 24 hours, and send via the AnyComms system

The Hub **must** acknowledge receipt of the MACF within 72 hours and feedback on the outcome.

If you haven't been told the outcome by the Safeguarding Hub within 3 days, always follow it up.

Referral checklist:

Have the child's education & safeguarding information with you & call from a place where you won't be interrupted or overheard.

Explain your concern & give information about:

The child/young person:

- Name, address, date of birth
- Presentation, hygiene, home environment
- Academic ability and achievement
- Attendance, punctuality, how long on roll
- Behaviour, response to rules & boundaries
- Relationships, bullying, discrimination
- Child/young person's view about their home life
- Health issues, learning difficulties/needs

The family:

- Who has parental responsibility for the pupil?
- Who do they live with?
- Does anyone involved have special needs?
- Who accompanies the pupil to school events?
- Other significant friends or relatives
- Parenting concerns such as domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse
- Care, safety, guidance, protection, support
- Family history, functioning
- Environment, housing, finance, unemployment, social & community integration

Previous & current support:

- Support tried, currently offering, what works?
- Other services involved with the child/family
- Previous education settings attended
- Previous/current assessments

Useful resources:

- Sheffield referral processes are described in the Thresholds of Need Guidance at: www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb
- Contact details for Sheffield Children's Social Care are here: Safeguarding Sheffield children website
- If necessary, anyone can refer a child to the **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, tel. 2734855**
- For the full Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) guidance, go to: Making a Referral following the Identification of Child Safety and Welfare Concerns

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Referring your safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding concerns - flow chart for education settings

Someone raises concerns about a child or young person at your setting:

- Concern passed on **verbally** to the DSL/D (in person or by phone) straight away
- Concern **then** written down & given/sent securely to DSL/D for safeguarding file

↓

DSL/D should collect information by:

- Reviewing the child or young person's safeguarding file
- Contact involved practitioners to discuss

These checks are important but should not delay the referral of a child or young person under 18 years old who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

↓

Is the child or young person **suffering or likely to suffer significant harm?**

↓

YES…

↓

Discuss with parents/carers?

- Consent preferable
- Tell parents or carers about concerns & referral
- Don't discuss with parents or carers if anyone at risk
- If can't contact parents or carers **DON'T WAIT** to refer as may increase risk

↓

Immediately:

- Discuss with allocated social worker or their manager
- If not allocated, refer to the **Hub tel. 2734855**
- Within 24 hours, securely send **MACF** to the Hub
- If Hub hasn't informed you in writing of outcome within 72 hours, **follow up**

↓

Not sure…

↓

Consult:

Sheffield Thresholds of Need Guidance, and:

↓

Discuss:

with Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 2734855

↓

NO but needs support…

↓

- Discuss support needs with parents/carers
- Explain EHA process & seek consent

↓

Early Help Assessment:

- EHA1 single issue
- FCAF multiple issues
- Discuss at TAF Meeting
- Send securely to MAST for discussion

↓

If complex needs identified or no positive outcome from early help:

- Family may need multi-agency, intensive support
- If not already done, complete FCAF (or equivalent) with parents/carers & involved practitioners
- Send securely to MAST for consideration
- **If child at risk of significant harm refer to Safeguarding Hub**

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Safeguarding files & access requests

Documenting safeguarding concerns is vital to the effective safeguarding of children and young people.

Safeguarding records are kept for many years & must be fully understood even after they have left your education setting.

All documents should:

- Be factual, evidenced, concise, complete, accurate and objective
- Include full names, dates, role/relationship to student
- Be securely stored (physically or electronically)

A safeguarding file should be set up for each student when a safeguarding concern is identified.

The file should be in date order & have a:

- Front sheet with basic details of the student
- Chronology of the contents
- Record of all discussions (including phone calls) and meetings relating to the student and their family
- Copy of any other documents e.g. assessments, minutes of conferences, core groups etc.

Each file record should include:

- Date and time of writing the record & when an incident and/or concern began
- clear & comprehensive summary of concern
- how the concern was followed up and resolved
- any action taken, decisions reached & outcome
- All discussions & decisions made (including with Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy)
- The extent and nature of any involvement by other professionals, and their full details

Storage:

- All individual hardcopy safeguarding files should be stored in a locked cabinet
- Access to child protection information is only via the Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy (DSL or DSD)
- Early Help information retained should be securely archived until 25 years after last action
- Child protection information retained should be securely archived at least until the subject is 85 years old (currently indefinitely until further direction from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse)

E-storage:

- **Always seek specialist advice**
- Encryption of files is strongly advised
- If using password protection, ensure Head & DSL/D's all have password, but do not share wider
- Passwords should use a standard formula that is strong and memorable
- If using 'restricted access' folders, ensure that they can't be over-ridden by your IT technicians
- Tightly manage access & permissions, disable promptly when staff leave or change role
- Check archived e-files don't have digital continuity or password protection limitations & that retention is set appropriately
- If using cloud software storage ensure it is secure, subject to UK law & meets all data protection requirements & handling standards

Sharing information:

Appropriate information must be shared by the DSL/D or Head with relevant staff & other education settings.

This must be done in a timely manner to respond effectively to the child or young person's needs.

Your setting should have a process for sharing information about a pupil after they have left.

Transferring files:

- All safeguarding files must be securely transferred **immediately,** in person or by signed for/special delivery, to the DSL/D of the new setting (including 16+ provisions)
- Always get a receipt for any file that is passed to another setting
- You may need to keep copies of significant documents for future use, e.g. documents that originated from your agency
- If the new establishment is out of city consider if a copy of the whole file should be retained
- Any copying of documents must be subject to personal & sensitive data processing conditions and current retention/archiving requirements
- E-transfers **must** be secure, e.g. encrypted, for **both** the sending and receiving IT systems
- Documents may be copied to the file of another child **only** if appropriate
- All DSL's receiving files must **not** dispose of any of the original contents

All safeguarding files must be professionally written & respectful.
People may request access to these files, or they may be used for e.g. court, case reviews, etc.
DSL/D's should regularly audit files to ensure standards are maintained.

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Safeguarding files & access requests

If a parent requests access to their child's safeguarding file, this is a 'Subject Access Request' and you MUST seek Human Resources & legal advice from your organisation. General guidance below:

Advice in relation to the release of a safeguarding chronology or file to e.g. a parent:

A request for safeguarding information is a 'Subject Access Request' & the Information Commissioners Office, Rights of Access webpage can advise you about the requirements to release information.

Subject Access Requests (SAR's):

The revised legislation places a duty on a data controller (e.g. the education setting) to respond to a request for personal data (SAR) within one month. The right of access to personal data belongs to the person the data is about (e.g. the child). However, as the child is a minor, their parents can be provided with the personal data if the child does not have the maturity/ability to understand it, or if the child does have maturity/ability and gives express permission for it to be released to the parents.

This would be a decision for the setting to make and being mindful of any sanctions that may be imposed by the Information Commissioner's Officer for releasing personal data in breach of these principles.

Education settings should:

- acknowledge receipt of the correspondence
- confirm that this is considered a subject access request under the General Data Protection Regulation
- explain that as the information relates to the child being subject to or at risk of child abuse/ill-treatment you are lawfully permitted to refuse to release such information to parents where considered necessary

In most cases, subject access requests would be dealt with in the following way:

- Send a holding response to acknowledge receipt of the correspondence confirming that a full response will be provided within one month of receipt of the request (or up to a further two months if the request is deemed to be complex)
- Confirm to parents that not all of the information requested may be retained by the setting and that you will confirm which of their questions need to be directed to the Local Authority or other agencies
- Provided free of charge. However, a "reasonable fee" can be charged for further copies of the same information and when a request is manifestly unfounded/excessive or repetitive.

Preparing for subject access requests (SAR):

✓ We can recognise a SAR and we understand when the right of access applies
✓ We have a policy for how to record SAR's we receive verbally
✓ We understand when we can refuse a SAR
✓ We are aware of the information we need to provide to individuals when we do so
✓ We understand the nature of the supplementary information we need to provide in response to a SAR

Complying with subject access requests:

✓ We have a process to ensure that we respond to a SAR without undue delay & within one month of receipt
✓ We are aware of the circumstances of when we can extend the time limit to respond to a SAR
✓ We understand the particular emphasis on using clear, plain language if we disclose information to a child
✓ We understand what we need to consider if a SAR includes information about others

If you require assistance in preparing information for release to pupils or parents following receipt of a SAR, please contact The Governance Team quickly for advice:

The Governance Team, Legal Services, Sheffield City Council
Email: legalservicesgovernance@sheffield.gov.uk

Any Sheffield school/college can contact the Governance Team for advice – there will be a charge unless they have a traded service package with Legal Services. Alternatively you can contact your HR Advisor.

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Safer recruitment

Education settings must create a safe culture, using recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might harm children.

Checks are required for **any** individual that is working (paid or unpaid) at the setting.

Governing bodies/proprietors must make reasonable decisions about the suitability of prospective employees based on Disclosure & Barring Service DBS, barred list & prohibition checks, identity verification, references, interview information etc.

When appointing staff, settings must:

- Verify candidate's identity e.g. via birth certificate, their mental & physical fitness, right to work in UK & qualifications (see later)
- Ask for written information about previous & current employment, scrutinise references and resolve concerns satisfactorily
- Obtain a barred list check (where all other relevant checks have been carried out) only:
  - For newly appointed staff in regulated activity, awaiting an Enhanced DBS
  - Where the individual came less than 3 months ago from a school or college post with regular child contact
- Get a DBS check before appointment where possible (see above) or ensure employee is supervised whilst DBS check is completed
- Request Childcare Disqualification Declaration (Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 09) where relevant (see Safeguarding in schools, Sept 18)
- Check they are not subject to a prohibition order (if a teacher) or section 128 direction (if in a management or governing role in any school)
- Use the DBS Update Service only with consent

It is an offence to allow a barred person to work in regulated activity.

Use the **Single Central Record** for all:

- **School** staff (including supply) and volunteers (including Governors) in regular contact with children/young people in the setting
- **College** staff & volunteers providing education to or in regular contact with someone under 18
- Members of the proprietor body in independent, free schools & academies

You can only keep a copy of an employee's DBS certificate with their consent & to comply with Handling of DBS certificate information, July 2018.

ID checking guidelines apply to all applications for standard or enhanced checks. **Contact your HR provider for more information.**

Agency & third party staff: you must obtain written notification from the agency that they have carried out all required checks on an individual & a photograph to confirm that this is the same person who is presenting at the setting.

Trainee/student teachers: you must ensure that all necessary checks (including an enhanced DBS certificate & barred list check) are carried out if you are the employer; if fee-funded, you should obtain written confirmation that the initial teacher-training provider has carried out the required checks.

Overseas applicants (Europe & rest of world): must have the same checks as other staff including barred list & enhanced DBS for those in regulated activity even if they have never been to the UK.

Further appropriate checks to consider relevant events that occurred outside the UK may include:

- Criminal records check for overseas applicants DfE 21
- A letter (via applicant) from relevant professional regulating authority where the applicant has worked confirming that they are not aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach
- If unavailable, consider alternative suitability checks e.g. a risk assessment
- More information available at: Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information, KCSIE, DfE 2021

Alternative Education Providers: you should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment

You are in **'regulated activity'** if through directly or contracted, paid or unpaid work you regularly (e.g. once a week or more, 4+ days in a 30 day period, or overnight), dependent on activity:

- Unsupervised & responsible for teaching, training, care, supervision of students; or
- In a 'specified place' (e.g. schools & colleges) with the opportunity for contact with children and young people under 18 years old (unless you are a supervised volunteer – see below); or
- Drive a vehicle only for children; or
- Provide advice & guidance wholly or mainly on children's well-being

Regulated activity also includes:

- Personal care e.g. helping a pupil, for reasons of age, illness, or disability, with eating or drinking, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing
- Health care provided by or under the direction of a health care professional

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Safer recruitment

Settings **must** make a referral to the DBS for anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where the harm test (that they may harm or put at risk of harm a child or vulnerable adult) is satisfied, & the individual:

- Has been convicted or cautioned for a relevant offence or there is reason to believe they have committed a listed relevant offence, and
- If they have been removed from paid or unpaid work in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left

All volunteers and governors:

- Who are engaged in 'regulated activity' must have enhanced DBS and barred list checks?
- Who are not engaged in 'regulated activity', but may regularly come into contact with children should have an enhanced DBS check not including barred list information (required for maintained school governors)
- Can work pending receipt of a DBS certificate if they have been risk assessed and are not left unsupervised with a student
- Cannot teach or care for a pupil unsupervised, without an enhanced DBS, barred list checks and, where relevant, a childcare disqualification declaration

In addition, a section 128 check must also be made for governors, as well as proprietors of independent schools, academies, free schools and alternative provision academies

Supervised volunteers & governors are **not** in regulated activity, but their supervision **must:**

- be properly checked
- **always** be regular, day to day & ongoing
- protect pupils & reflect:
  - their ages, vulnerability, group size
  - number of workers & volunteers involved, their child contact & level of supervision

Settings need to complete a **risk assessment** for:

- The nature of the work with children
- What the setting knows about the volunteer
- Whether volunteer has other voluntary activities or employment to advise on suitability, and
- Whether role needs an enhanced DBS check

Contractors:

- **Must** have appropriate DBS checks if engaging in regulated activity or in regular contact with children
- Without checks who have contact with children **must** be supervised, and **must not** engage in regulated activity
- Identity should always be checked on arrival

If the contractor is self-employed & cannot obtain a DBS check the school or college should consider doing this on their behalf.

Family or other visitors:

Settings cannot request DBS or barred list checks for relatives or community members; escort onsite; do not leave unsupervised with other children.

Host families:

Short term accommodation with another family of pupils under 18 for learning experiences could be regulated activity and/or 'private fostering'. The setting making the arrangement is the regulated activity provider and should request a DBS Certificate with barred list check.

Host families abroad cannot be DBS checked - work with partner settings abroad to understand & agree arrangements & contact their foreign embassy or High Commission to find out if similar checks can be done.

Work experience:

A barred list check should be requested from the employer if the person supervising or working with the young person is in regulated activity and the young person is under 16 years.

If the young person is 16 years old or over & on work experience in a 'specified place' (e.g. school) the work experience provider should consider obtaining an enhanced DBS check for them.

Independent schools, academies, free schools & alternative provision academies:

The Secretary of State will confirm the identity & complete an enhanced DBS & other checks before an individual becomes:

- the proprietor or chair of a body of people which is the proprietor of an independent school, or
- the chair of the governing body of a non-maintained special school.

For more information contact your HR and follow these links:

- Disclosure and Barring Service
- DBS Barring Referral guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2020
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
- Guidance for safer working practice - education settings and Covid19 addendum

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Sexualised behaviour

Many practitioners, parents & carers find it difficult to distinguish between normal and problematic sexual behaviour of children. We are often faced with cultural, gender, political & legal issues whilst considering safety. This guidance helps us understand healthy sexual behaviour & assess and respond appropriately.

Age-appropriate sexual play and behaviour:

0 – 5 Years

- Highly influenced by family environment
- Playing games about relationships
- Curiosity: nakedness, body parts, genitals

5 – 9 Years

- Peer contact significantly increases
- touching own or curious about others' genitals
- Curious about sex & relationships
- Become more inhibited, body privacy
- Uses swearing/slang words for body parts

9 – 13 Years

- Solitary masturbation, need for privacy
- Developing use of sexual humour & language
- Increased peer interaction and experimentation
- Interest in popular culture & online media

13-17 Years

- Sexually explicit conversations & jokes
- Interest in erotica/pornography on & offline
- Consensual non/sexual relationships with peers on & offline

Sexualised behaviour in children is different from adults & requires different assessment & treatment. Generally, there are 3 types:

Reactive Sexual Behaviour:

- Spontaneous and/or impulsive, environment trigger?
- Something witnessed or experienced
- Overwhelmed, what did experience mean?
- High risk of engaging others if no disclosure
- Real event from internet, DVD or similar

Sexualised Behaviour:

- Characterised as sad, lonely, empty
- Coping with negative/unpleasant emotions?
- Possible severe physical and/or emotional neglect?
- Gravitate to others with similar experiences – mutual, inappropriate sexual behaviour

Coercive Sexual Behaviour:

- Exposure to severe and long-term abuse
- Mimics aggressive adult sexual behaviour

Healthy sexual behaviour is:

- Appropriate to the age and/or developmental stage of the student
- Possessing characteristics of mutuality, choice, exploration and possibly fun
- Evidencing no intent to cause harm
- Being in balance with other aspects of the student's life & development

Factors influencing sexual behaviours:

- Lack of sex/relationship information, privacy, rules, consequences & boundaries, support
- Boredom, loneliness, anxiety, confusion, depression, attention/relationship needs, tension
- Family/carer conflict
- Abuse, sexual exploitation and/or trafficking
- Anger, retaliation
- Communication difficulties
- Excitement, exploration, curiosity, arousal etc.
- Gender issues
- Copying behaviour e.g. on the internet or TV

Key implications for practice:

- Children are **not** mini adult sex offenders
- Students should be accountable for their actions **and** be supported with their experiences
- Focus on young person's living environment as much as on individual treatment plans
- Students who have abused others may be less amenable to therapy/treatment & require high degree of risk management

Useful resources:

Safeguarding Sheffield Children website:

- Sexualised Behaviour: Professionals/Volunteers
- Peer Abuse: Education>policies & procedures
- Education settings safety plan: Education>toolkit

Other resources

- Sexual Behaviour Traffic Light Tool, Brook
- Sexual behaviour in children, NSPCC
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021

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Sexualised behaviour

Steps to consider:

Use Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool **alongside your assessment**

1. Communicating concerns to child & parents in calm, clear, non-judgemental, factual way
2. Describing behaviour, how people might feel, what is 'appropriate'
3. Being clear that the behaviour should not re-occur or escalate
4. Preventative rules/boundaries
5. If another student was focus:
   a) reassure them, not their fault
   b) tell an adult if repeated
   c) discuss their support needs
   d) tell them you will inform parents
   e) consider confidentiality
6. Record/track behaviour, issues, incidents
7. Monitor, observe, support child:
   a) interactions with others
   b) Discuss impact of behaviour, feelings, friendship, interests
   c) encourage them to develop an internal motivation to stop
   d) consider restrictions & rules e.g. secluding child for safety
8. Discuss with Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) & decide **if appropriate** who promptly talks to parent
9. DSL/D will do/consider:
   a) FCAF (Family Common Assessment) with parents or carers
   b) safety plan for setting
   c) involving agencies including Children's Social Care
   d) 'team around family' (TAF) meeting to discuss support
10. If there is a risk of significant harm to the child, young person, or others, the DSL/D must refer, **before** any/further discussion with parents/carers, to:

The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub
tel. 0114 2734855

GREEN Light Behaviour: safe, healthy sexual development:

- Between children of similar age or developmental ability
- Reflects curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices
- 'Normal' but inappropriate in education setting

Action:

- ➢ Follow steps 1-7
- ➢ Reassure parents & child there is no concern or need for further discipline
- ➢ Ask parents to reinforce 'message' at home

AMBER Light Behaviour: not safe healthy development:

- Age or developmental differences
- Activity type, frequency, duration, or context

Action:

- ➢ Inform DSL/D **immediately**
- ➢ Follow Steps 1 to 9
- ➢ Meet parents & discuss where behaviour may have come from, that this does not necessarily mean their child has been abused, the school response to the behaviour
- ➢ Do not meet with parents until step 8 is completed

RED Light Behaviour: outside safe healthy development:

- Is coercive, secret, compulsive, threatening
- Requires action from setting & other agencies

Action:

- ➢ Inform DSL/D **immediately**
- ➢ Follow Steps 1 to 10
- ➢ Do not meet with parents until step 8 is completed

Dealing with persistent masturbation is one of the most common issues that education staff ask advice about:

- Staff should discuss their observations with the DSL/D
- DSL/D should talk to child's parents/carers, as there may be a medical association e.g. a rash

Strategies:

- **Initially:** Describe the behaviour to the child, how people might feel about it, what is 'appropriate'; then consider:
- **Cueing:** agree a simple word or visual cue that you can say or show when the child is masturbating
- **Redirection:** note when the behaviour occurs (reaction to stress?), provide an alternative activity or distraction
- **Positive reinforcement:** a chart or visual cue when child is behaving appropriately, e.g. star chart or 'thumbs up

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Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND)

A pupil has Special Educational Needs if their learning difficulty or disability requires special educational provision different from or additional to that normally available.

Many safeguarding issues may overlap with a pupil's SEND needs.

Education settings should:

- Assess and respond quickly to each pupil's current skills & level of attainment on entry
- Build on information from previous settings and key stages
- Consider whether a pupil has a disability under the Equality Act 2010 & what reasonable adjustments are needed
- Listen to, understand & address pupils, parents & carers knowledge & concerns
- Assess pupils with emotional and/or behaviour issues for undiagnosed learning or communication difficulties or mental health issues
- If housing, family or other issues are present, consider a multi-agency approach using a Family Common Assessment.
- Consider whether bullying, bereavement etc. are having an impact on well-being
- Look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English rather than having special needs

There are four broad areas of need which help settings to plan & review the support provided:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotion and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Safeguarding training:

SENDCos are welcome to attend the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership 'Advanced' level safeguarding training for education settings. Follow the link above.

SEND pupils in alternative provision:

If a SEND pupil is with an Alternative Education Provider, they must follow the pupil's EHC plan. If no plan is in place the provider should employ an appropriate response to their needs. Further information about health needs is here:

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school, DfE May 2013

Improving outcomes - settings should:

- Support pupils with SEND, whether or not they have an EHC Plan
- Designate a SENDCo to co-ordinate provision & liaise with parents & carers
- Ensure that pupils with SEND can take part in all activities at the setting
- Follow the statutory guidance 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school'
- Understand & follow the Equality Act 2010 including reasonable adjustments, providing aids & services, & preventing disadvantage
- Prevent discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations
- Ensure a member of the governing body has specific oversight of SEND arrangements
- Regularly review & record the use of SEND expertise & resources to improve provision
- Involve parents & carers in decisions to obtain specialist advice about support & intervention
- Consider a range of support, equipment, strategies & interventions to support progress

Principles in practice include:

- Taking all views into account
- Consider whether parental vulnerabilities affect their understanding of the child's needs
- Enabling everyone to take part in decisions
- Working with all agencies to provide support
- Identifying need
- High quality provision to meet those needs
- Inclusive practices & removing barriers
- Helping pupils to prepare for adulthood

Chapter 1, *SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years*

Your SEND policy must be set out in clear, straightforward language & easily accessible by young people and parents.

Schools should publish information on their websites about:

- The implementation of their SEND policy
- The names of staff in school for pupils, parents or carers to talk to if they have concerns

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Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND)

Working Together:

Local authorities have a duty to ensure, & partners have a duty to co-operate with, the provision of good quality & well integrated services from educational, training, health & social care agencies to promote wellbeing for children & young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

This requires close co-operation between all partners to research, plan, commission & review services.

Schools will contribute to the educational provision described in the Sheffield's SEND Local Offer and take part in wider strategic planning for education in the local area.

Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment:

If an education setting has a pupil with significant needs requiring immediate specialist assessment & intervention which the setting is unable to provide, it can make a request for an EHC Needs Assessment from the Local Authority.

Education settings must:

- Co-operate in carrying out the assessment & the development & review of an EHC plan
- Admit a young person to the school & provide educational support if specified in the plan

Follow links for more information on: EHC Needs Assessment

Preparing for adulthood - all pupils should be:

- Supported to prepare for adult life & achieve employment, independent living, health & community participation
- Included in all activities, social groups, friendship networks & community activities, particularly when transferring from one phase or setting to another.

Looked after children (LAC):

- Around 70% of looked after children have some form of SEND, and it is likely that a significant proportion of them will have an EHC plan
- All education settings must appoint a LAC Designated Teacher who works closely with the SENDCo to ensure that the implications are fully understood by relevant school staff

Local authorities must promote the educational achievement of LAC/previously LAC children wherever they are placed and appoint a Virtual School Head (VSH) to lead a team which tracks their progress

The right to make decisions:

At the end of the academic year in which they turn 16, young people have some rights to make requests & decisions independently of their parents/carers (Children and Families Act 2014).

Parents & carers can continue to support young people or act on their behalf with the agreement of the young person (dependent on mental capacity).

In most situations parents & carers will remain closely involved particularly where there are concerns about a pupil's behaviour or welfare & in discussions about the young person's studies.

Although the Children & Families Act 2014 transfers some rights directly to young people from the end of compulsory school age, this does not necessitate any change to a school's safeguarding or welfare policy.

Military Service children:

The Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) provides advice to Service parents, educational settings & local authorities about SEND issues.

Children may face difficulties that are unique to the nature of their serving parent's employment, e.g.:

- Relocating more often & sometimes at short notice needing transitions to be well managed to avoid delays in assessing & meeting needs
- Deployment to operational arenas resulting in anxiety, dips in educational performance and/or emotional difficulties.

Education settings should ensure that:

- The impact of their policies, administrative processes and patterns of provision do not disadvantage such children
- All SEND & safeguarding records transfer quickly between education settings in the UK and overseas, to enable effective planning
- All reviews explicitly consider Service-related issues
- Access to assessments, interventions & provision is determined on the nature, severity & complexity of the needs presented and not to the amount of time left in a particular school
- They consider how the Service Pupils' Premium is used to improve SEND provision
- The Ministry of Defence is developing an Education Overseas Supportability (EOS) form to replace the Pupil Information Profile for military service children

Chapter 10, Children & young people in specific circumstances, SEND Code of Practice. 0 to 25 years

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Staff safeguarding supervision

Working together to safeguard children, DFE 2018 (p 57 & 58) says that:

- Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions
- Professionals should have sufficient time, funding, supervision & support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively
- Professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time

Effective supervision:

- Provides support, coaching & training for the practitioner & promotes the interests of children
- Should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork & continuous improvement
- Encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues
- Regular one-to-one meetings that support professionals to reflect critically on the impact of their decisions
- Should be a safe environment where trust and confidentiality are maintained (as appropriate)
- Promotes equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice

Supervision should provide opportunities to:

- Discuss issues
- Identify solutions
- Receive coaching to improve their professional effectiveness

The purpose, venue, timing, specific responsibilities, recording, sickness arrangements, complaints & reviewing processes should be agreed by both parties in a 'supervision agreement'.

Frequency:

Supervision should be at least every 8 weeks and reflect:

- The level of experience & competence (not necessarily length of service) of staff
- Particular circumstances e.g. difficult work, risk, personal & performance issues, levels of stress

Changes to supervision should be by agreement between the two parties and be clearly recorded.

Agency and temporary staff should receive supervision in the same way as permanent staff.

The four main functions of supervision are:

Management:

- Quality of performance
- Discussion of relevant policies & procedures
- Safeguarding roles and responsibilities
- Development and monitoring of workload

Learning and Development:

- Identifying learning style and barriers, development needs and learning opportunities
- Giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Reflective practice through case discussion

Personal Support:

- Clarifying boundaries
- Allowing staff to express their feelings about the impact of their safeguarding work
- Monitoring their health
- Obtaining appropriate health support when appropriate

Mediation:

- ensuring that staff, the setting, the agency and other organisations are working together effectively
- dealing sensitively with concerns
- consulting and briefing staff on changes and developments that affect their area of work
- advocating between worker or team and other parts of the agency or with outside agencies

Who needs supervision?

- Supervision should be offered to all staff whose work brings them into contact with children, young people and their families
- Whilst the main focus may be on the safeguarding team members, other staff will need support either on an ongoing or specific basis
- Staff should be made aware that supervision is available if they want it and to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead to discuss further

Early years providers in schools must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families:

Early years foundation stage statutory framework (EYFS) 2020

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Staff safeguarding supervision

A written record of supervision:

This is the supervisor's responsibility & should:

- Allow an issue to be revisited later and still be understood
- Record all decisions, the reasons for them, agreed actions, who will take responsibility and the timescale for carrying out these actions
- Be typed where possible
- Be signed and dated by both parties
- Be copied to the supervisee
- Be access restricted

If there is disagreement about the content of the record this should be recorded by both parties.

If a student is discussed, a summary of the discussion & agreed actions & timescales must be put in the student's safeguarding file.

Supervision records are the property of the commissioning organisation, not the individual.

Supervisors may need to discuss the content of supervision sessions with e.g. their line manager; this should always be with the knowledge of the supervisee.

When a supervisee leaves the organisation, the records should be retained for two years after the member of staff has left and then shredded.

Where a member of staff transfers to another section or supervisor within the organisation their records should be passed onto the new supervisor.

Who should provide formal supervision?

One of the purposes of safeguarding supervision is to provide specialist guidance and advice in relation to safeguarding and child protection matters.

This means that the person providing supervision needs to be fully trained and experienced in safeguarding children as well as being trained in providing supervision itself.

This may mean that an education setting will need to use the supervision skills of people outside the setting, either across other areas of the organisation, or from private or independent organisations.

If this is the case for your setting you must ensure that the supervisor follows appropriate confidentiality and data security processes.

Types of supervision:

There are 4 broad types of supervision; the type your staff need will depend on regularity and purpose. Your safeguarding team will benefit from all 4 types.

One to one supervision:

- The most common supervision method
- In private, pre-arranged time & agreed agenda
- Having the same supervisor develops trust, openness and honesty and confidentiality

However, other methods can complement, rather than replace, one to one supervision.

Group supervision:

- A group of staff involved in the same task, meeting together with supervisor to discuss work issues
- May be done a regular team meeting or as a separate session to look at specific issues

Unplanned or "ad-hoc" supervision:

- Allows staff to discuss, obtain a decision or gain permission to do something quickly
- Staff who work closely with their supervisor may communicate daily but will still need regular one to one supervision

Peer supervision:

- A systematic approach where colleagues discuss professional issues & key topics with one another
- Should result in solutions that are helpful to the person who presented his or her problem

It may be necessary to supplement supervision for staff who are experiencing trauma, e.g. where they have been involved in providing information for a court case or Serious Case Review or coming to terms with serious injury or death of a child or young person.

In these situations staff may need extra support from their line manager, the setting's safeguarding team and Occupational Health.

Useful resources:

- Working together to safeguard children, DFE 2018
- Maintaining a Safe Culture: Supervision, section 4.2, SCSP Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual

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Substance misuse

Parental substance misuse:

Some parents & carers who drink problematically, use drugs or misuse prescribed medication can still provide a safe, secure and supportive family environment for children.

However for some families, drug and/or alcohol misuse can become the central focus of the adults' lives, feelings and social behaviour, and has the potential to impact negatively on a child at every age from conception to adulthood.

Adults who misuse drugs and/or alcohol may face multiple problems e.g.:

- homelessness
- accommodation or financial problems
- difficult relationships
- domestic abuse
- mental health issues
- lack of effective social support systems
- issues relating to criminal activities
- poor health

Assessment of the impact of these stresses on the child is as important as assessing the drug and/or alcohol misuse itself.

Working with families with substance misuse:

- Child focused not substance focused
- How can services support parents/carers to meet the child's needs?
- What is the parent/carer concerned about, what help do they want?
- What can you offer, where can you signpost them to?
- What are the family strengths & weaknesses?
- Work closely with all agencies involved
- Ensure plans are realistic and child focused
- Address any barriers to accessing services

Multi-agency work and reviewing:

Assessments should be:

- completed jointly by the family & involved agencies
- consider each individual's changing needs
- evaluate the progress & effectiveness of intervention
- regularly & flexibly reviewed

All actions should be documented and shared with the family and agencies.

Risk factors:

- Parents/carers misuse substances together
- Parent or carer misusing substances with their prescribed medication
- Pregnant mother misusing substances
- Substance misuse occurring at home
- Home used by other substance misusers
- Family not engaging with services
- Parent/carer believing that their substance misuse doesn't affect their children
- The absence of extended family support
- Inappropriate child care arrangements
- Child exposed to substance use
- Dangers of drug using equipment & ingestion
- Domestic abuse &/or parental mental ill-health

Impacts:

- Inconsistent parenting, boundaries, disruption of routines, not meeting child's needs
- Child has poor emotional development & inappropriate caring responsibilities
- Normalising of substance misuse & criminality
- Poor education attendance and attainment
- Secrecy, stigma, shame & poor relationships

Risks & impacts have a cumulative effect i.e. the more there are, the higher the concern.

Protective factors:

- Parent/carer recognises impact, wants change
- Safeguards are in place at home for the child
- Family demonstrates real engagement with services, support and treatment
- Family have good support networks
- Wider family aware of substance misuse issues & providing support
- Child has a close positive bond with a trusted adult
- One parent/carer provides consistency, attention, support and routine
- Child engages in activities & peer friendships
- Child develops age-appropriate independence, confidence & self-esteem
- Child regularly attends at an education setting

If child protection concerns are identified you must ring The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub tel. 0114 2734855 immediately.

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Substance misuse

Young people who misuse substances:

Drugs & alcohol often play a role in the lives of young people through curiosity, experimentation, recreational or problematic use.

Not every young person develops problems; not all experimentation leads to continued use or misuse.

However for some, substance misuse can contribute to:

- Poor mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Issues at school, college or work
- Breakdown of family and peer relationships
- Engaging in further risky behaviour

Vulnerable young people include those who:

- are involved in anti-social behaviour or the criminal justice system
- are or were 'Looked After' by the local authority
- are excluded from mainstream education
- go missing from education, home or care
- are homeless
- are being sexually or criminally exploited
- have family members who misuse substances

All young people should receive good education, information and advice about substance use & early support and specialist help where necessary.

If child protection concerns are identified where a young person is using substances, seek advice from The Corner Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service **tel. 0114 2752051 as well as** referring to Children's Social Care **immediately.**

The **Sheffield Young People & Substance Misuse Screening Toolkit** is available from The Corner (above) and should be used if:

- A young person asks for advice or information about or tells you they are using drugs, alcohol, glues, gases, aerosols or novel psychoactive substances (previously known as 'legal highs')
- A substance misuse related incident occurs, e.g. possession of drugs or young person intoxicated
- A young person is in a vulnerable group above
- Substance misuse is identified in the home
- You have other concerns that the young person might be involved in substance misuse
- A Family Common Assessment Framework (FCAF) raises concerns about substance use

Risk indicators:

Substance misuse by a young person does not necessarily put them at risk of significant harm, but you should consider:

- The child's age, substances used, amounts, method of use
- If the use is becoming chaotic or risky
- If criminal behaviour, radicalisation &/or gang are involved
- If any exploitation or coercion is present
- If an adult is facilitating the substance use
- If the young person is caring for another child while under the influence of substances

The analysis of **Serious Case Reviews** in England & Wales between 2014 & 17 shows that:

- The frequency of parental substance misuse (36%) was much higher than in the general population, where 2-3% of children are thought to be living with parents who misuse substances
- The frequency of 11-17 year olds misusing substances was also higher: 24% for alcohol, 29% for drug misuse
- **Prompt and effective intervention is vital where substance misuse is known or suspected.**

Useful links:

- Safeguarding Children Living in Families with Drug and/or Alcohol Misuse Protocol
- Sheffield Alcohol Support Service (SASS)
- Sheffield Health and Social Care Services (alcohol, opiate and non-opiate services)
- Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Drug and Alcohol Misuse information
- National Organisation for Foetal Alcohol Syndrome UK – Teachers Toolkit
- FASD Network UK - Resources
- Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership FASD Learning Brief
- SEAP Alcohol Screening Tool
- Drinkaware
- Know the Score
- Drugs and me
- Sheffield Young Carers

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Safeguarding Children in Education Training Pathway

All staff in Early Years and Foundation Stage school settings should follow this training pathway
LAC Designated Teacher role training is through LAC Virtual School, tel. 0114 203 7790 or email virtualschool@sheffield.gov.uk
The Alternative Education Providers (SCC) training pathway is available here: SCC Alternative Education Providers Training

All staff with regular child contact:	Head, Principal, Governor, Senior Leadership Team (SLT):	Pastoral & support staff working with pupils outside classroom:	Online-Safety Coordinators (must be a DSL/D as well):	Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy (DSL/D) and any other staff with a significant safeguarding or child protection role:
• Safeguarding Induction from DSL/D **And:** • Safeguarding Children in Education E-learning **And:** • Basic/Whole-School Safeguarding Children in Education Training (3 yearly from QAIS/SCSP)	• Training for all staff who have regular contact with children **And:** • Governors Safeguarding Training **And:** • Safer Recruitment Training face to face e.g. from Learn Sheffield **Or:** • Online Safer Recruitment Training	• Training for all staff who have regular contact with children **And:** • Working Together: promoting well-being & keeping children safe training **And:** • E-Learning courses for specific safeguarding issues	• Training for all staff who have regular contact with children **And:** • Online-Safety: a Whole School Approach **And:** • Annual Online-Safety Refresher **And:** • Training for Designated Safeguarding Leads/Deputies	• Training for all staff who have regular contact with children • Training for all pastoral & support staff **And:** • Advanced Initial Safeguarding Children in Education • Advanced Refresher SCIE (annually) • Safeguarding Under-5s in Schools (primary settings) **And the following required multi-agency training:** • Prevent (WRAP) via bookings@learnsheffield.co.uk • Conferences & Core Groups (SCSP) • Signs of Safety (SCSP) **And:** • A varied programme of SCSP lunchtime briefings and workshops available

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Under 5's in schools

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017, is mandatory for all schools with pupils under 5 years old.

It includes four guiding principles:

- Every child is unique
- Children learn through positive relationships
- Children develop in enabling environments
- Children learn and develop differently

The safeguarding and welfare requirements in this framework cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe & promote their welfare.

The safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by regulations made under Section 39(1) (b) of the Childcare Act 2006.

Schools are not required to have separate policies to cover EYFS requirements if they are already met through an existing policy.

Safeguarding & child protection - schools must:

- Be alert to any concerns about a child at home, in their community, wider family or elsewhere
- Identify a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) from the leadership team & one or more Designated Safeguarding Deputies (DSD)
- Ensure that the DSL/D attend training provided by the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) through the Local Authority Quality Assurance and Involvement Service (QAIS), to undertake their responsibilities to:
  - Liaise with & refer to Children's Social Care and Police
  - Support, advise and guide staff
- Train **all** staff about safeguarding children (as above through QAIS)
- Ensure the suitability of their staff and volunteers to work with children
- Follow the Government's statutory guidance:
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE 18
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021
  - Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales, HO 19

Outings – schools must:

- Ensure children are kept safe while on outings
- Ensure that driver & vehicles in which children are being transported are adequately insured.

Suitable people – schools must:

- Ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role
- Ensure that only people whose suitability has been checked have regular contact with children
- Undertake an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check for anyone aged 16 or over and working with children
- Tell staff that they are expected to disclose any:
  - Convictions
  - Court orders
  - Reprimands and warnings
- Not allow people whose suitability has not been checked work unsupervised with children
- Record all information on the single central record about:
  - Qualifications
  - Identity checks
  - Vetting processes
  - DBS checks
- Meet their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Make a referral to DBS if staff dismissed (or would have been, had they not left first) because they harmed/put a child at risk of harm

Staff taking medication or other substances – schools must ensure that:

- Staff are not under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children
- Staff who are taking medication which may affect child care, seek medical advice
- Any staff medication on the premises is securely stored and out of reach of children at all times
- They complete a risk assessment if necessary

Risk assessments – schools must:

- Rake all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks
- Assess all risks and hazards which may arise
- Demonstrate the steps to be taken to remove, minimise and manage all risks and hazards
- Include adult to child ratios in risk assessment
- Record & make available all risk assessments

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Under 5's in schools

Qualifications, training, support, skills - schools must ensure:

- All staff receive induction training to understand their roles and responsibilities, including:
  - emergency evacuation procedures
  - safeguarding & child protection
  - the provider's equality policy
  - health and safety issues
- Safeguarding supervision & support for staff who have contact with children & their families
- Management and staff have the required qualifications and experience
- At least one trained paediatric first aider at setting with children & on outings
- Level 2/3 newly qualified staff must have a paediatric first aid certificate to be included in staff to child ratios
- The number of children, staff, & the premises layout is considered to ensure a paediatric first aider is able to respond quickly to emergencies
- Staff understand English well enough to ensure the well-being of children in their care
- Each child has an identified 'key person'
- Children are adequately supervised
- Appropriate child to staff ratios are in place

Information for parents and carers - schools must make the following available:

- How EYFS is being delivered and how parents and carers can access more information
- Range & type of activities/experiences for children, daily routines, how parents/carers can share learning at home
- How children with special educational needs and disabilities are supported
- What food and drinks are provided for children
- Details of all policies & procedures including uncollected children or a child going missing
- Staffing, including the name of their child's key person and their role
- Emergency phone number of setting

Further advice & support for practitioners:

- **Early Help Advice: 0114 2037485**
- **Child Protection Advice & Referral: 0114 2734855**

Health: Medicines – schools must:

- Promote good health of all children at setting
- Prevent the spread of infection
- Have policy & procedure for:
  - responding to ill or infectious children
  - written parental/carer permission to administer medicines
- Only give medicines containing aspirin if prescribed by a doctor
- Provide staff training where administration of medicine requires medical/technical knowledge
- Record in writing & inform parents & carers as soon as possible when medicine is administered.

Food and drink – schools must:

- Request and act on a child's dietary and health requirements, prior to admission
- Ensure healthy, balanced & nutritious meals, snacks, drinks
- fresh drinking water is available and accessible
- Provide suitable facilities and trained staff for the hygienic preparation of food.

Accident or injury – schools must ensure:

- Adequately stocked & accessible first aid box
- Written record of accidents, injuries & treatment and inform parents & carers as soon as possible
- Notify local child protection agencies of serious accidents, injury or death of a child in their care
- Act on any advice from those agencies.

Managing behaviour - schools must:

- Manage children's behaviour appropriately
- Ensure that no person threatens or gives corporal punishment to a child
- Only use physical intervention to avert danger or manage behaviour if absolutely necessary
- Keep a record of any physical intervention and inform parents & carers as soon as practicable
- Not use or threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a child's well-being.

Further safeguarding information is on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children **website in the:**

- Early Years and Childcare section
- Schools & other education settings **section**

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Under 5's in schools

Premises, environment & equipment:

Safety – schools must:

- Ensure premises are fit for purpose, suitable for age of children & the activities provided
- Comply with all health and safety legislation
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the complete safety of everyone on the premises
- Have an emergency evacuation procedure
- Have appropriate fire detection and control equipment which is in working order
- Ensure that fire doors & exits are clearly identifiable, free of obstruction & easily opened

Premises - schools must ensure:

- Suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies
- Adequate supply of spare clothes & any other necessary items is always available
- Area where staff, parents/carers can talk confidentially
- Children don't leave premises unsupervised
- Children only released into care of individuals notified to the provider by parents and carers
- An agreed procedure for checking visitor identity
- Unauthorised persons do not enter premises
- They have public liability insurance

Information about children – schools must record the following information for each child:

- Full name and date of birth
- Name and address of every parent and carer for the child who is known to the provider
- Information about any other person who has parental responsibility for the child
- Who the child normally lives with
- 2 emergency contact numbers where possible

Inspections – schools must:

- Notify parents and carers if they become aware that they are to be inspected by Ofsted
- After an inspection by Ofsted supply a copy of the Ofsted report to parents and carers

Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND):

- All schools, colleges and early years' providers must have arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs or who are disabled.
- All schools, colleges and early years providers must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice
- Mainstream schools must identify a member of staff to act as a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)

Information & records - schools must:

- Obtain, maintain & share records/information to safely & efficiently manage the setting & meet children's needs
- Share information regularly with parents, carers & between providers, as appropriate
- Include parents & carers' views in records
- Make records easily accessible and available
- Ensure confidential information about staff & children are held securely & only accessible to those who have a right to see them
- Be aware of their responsibilities under current Data Protection legislation and where relevant, the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Ensure that all staff understand:
  - protecting the privacy of children
  - legal requirement that children's information is treated confidentiality
- Parents & carers are given access to all records about their child, unless exemptions apply under current Data Protection legislation
- Records relating to individual children must be retained in line with SCSP requirements

Complaints – schools must:

- Have a written complaints procedure
- Keep a written record of outcomes
- Investigate all written complaints re EYFS compliance
- Notify complainants of investigation outcomes within 28 days of receiving the complaint
- Make record of complaints available to Ofsted
- Make Ofsted contact details available

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Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone sincerely raises concerns either within the organisation they work for or externally.

These concerns usually relate to misconduct or malpractice in the past or now or something they fear may happen in the future.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects workers from any detriment from their employer (e.g. bullying or termination of contract) if they disclose information that they reasonably believe is in the public interest and relates to:

- a criminal offence
- the breach of a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- a danger to the health & safety of an individual
- damage to the environment
- information concerning the above that has been or is likely to be deliberately concealed

All settings need a clear whistleblowing policy that is known to all, includes how to escalate concerns & has a clear procedure for allegations against persons working with the setting.

The organisational culture at your setting should:

- Encourage a safe environment that welcomes the raising of concerns about poor or unsafe practices, resolution of conflict & building trust
- Understand the benefit of addressing issues
- Support staff to reflect about their practice
- Respond to concerns quickly, proportionately, fairly and without reprisal
- Value regular staff learning and training

Whistleblowing different from other concerns:

- A **grievance** is when an employee has a dispute about their employment & it is dealt with by their organisations' internal procedures
- A **complaint** is usually about someone being poorly treated and seeking redress or justice

Ofsted has some limited powers to deal with complaints e.g. about settings that it regulates such as childcare providers and children's homes. Ofsted does not regulate schools and colleges.

In the case of maintained schools Ofsted can consider complaints relating to standards of education, pupil achievement, pupil needs not being met and poor management practice.

Concerns about an organisation's practice when safeguarding children or vulnerable adults:

- Raise your concern internally, e.g. with your senior leadership team
- If you feel unable to do this (e.g. your concern relates to them), raise your concern with one of the specified people in your organisation's whistleblowing policy
- If you have raised your concern but feel that the matter has not been dealt with appropriately, your whistleblowing policy should tell you how to escalate that concern

Worried about how to raise a concern?:

- Seek independent advice e.g. through your trade union and/or professional body
- Contact the NSPCC, Ofsted or Secretary of State for Education as appropriate (see below)

In some circumstances your identity can be kept confidential, but this is not always appropriate as it may limit an investigation.

Anonymous allegations must be taken seriously, but information about a child or vulnerable adult being at risk must be passed to Social Care to be investigated and any anonymity may be lost.

Useful resources:

- **NSPCC** Whistleblowing Advice Line:
  - tel. 0800 028 0285
  - email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- **Secretary of State for Education** (whistleblowing & complaints):
  - Tel: 0370 000 2288
  - Website: www.gov.uk/contact-dfe
- **Ofsted Whistleblowing** (residential schooling):
  - tel. 0300 1233155
  - email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
- **'Whistleblowing procedure for maintained schools', DFE 2014**
- **Public Interest Disclosure Act information**
- **Protect Advice Line:**
  - tel. 020 3117 2520

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