



# MAPLE GROVE

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**LEAD DSL:** Nicola Slawson

**SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:** Ann Henderson

## Contents

|      |  |    |
|------|--|----|
| 1.0  | Policy statement .....   | 3  |
| 2.0  | What is safeguarding and child protection?.....                            | 3  |
| 3.0  | Local Arrangements for the school .....                                    | 5  |
| 4.0  | The role of Senior Managers and Governor.....                              | 9  |
| 5.0  | Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) .....                                   | 10 |
| 6.0  | Safeguarding Training and Updates for all staff .....                      | 12 |
| 7.0  | Roles and Responsibilities of Staff.....                                   | 13 |
| 8.0  | Safer Recruitment.....   | 14 |
| 9.0  | Early Help .....   | 14 |
| 10.0 | Reporting concerns .....   | 15 |
| 11.0 | Managing Referrals to DBS and professional bodies .....                    | 16 |
| 12.0 | Partnership working and sharing information .....                          | 17 |
| 13.0 | Peer on Peer Abuse .....   | 17 |
| 14.0 | Bullying.....  | 19 |
| 15.0 | Preventative Strategies .....  | 20 |
| 16.0 | Online Safety.....   | 21 |
| 17.0 | Children Missing Education .....   | 21 |
| 18.0 | Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)..... | 22 |
| 19.0 | Serious violence.....  | 23 |
| 20.0 | Female Genital Mutilation .....  | 23 |
| 21.0 | Preventing Radicalisation.....   | 24 |
| 22.0 | Children Requiring Support with their Mental Health .....                  | 24 |
| 23.0 | Physical Interventions .....   | 24 |
| 24.0 | Allegations against Staff .....  | 25 |
| 25.0 | Working with the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent) .....  | 26 |
| 26.0 | Whistleblowing .....   | 26 |
| 27.0 | Covid-19 and disruption to schools.....                                    | 27 |
| 28.0 | Policy Review .....  | 30 |

## 1.0 Policy statement

Outcomes First Group is committed to ensuring that all of the people we support are effectively safeguarded in all services including fostering, schools and residential homes at all times. This policy applies to all children and young adults receiving education in our settings. It applies when working online and offline, in settings and in all virtual communications.

Safeguarding and child protection must always be the highest priority and at the forefront of everything we do. A whole school approach is required to ensure safeguarding and child protection are embedded in all decisions, planning, policy and day-to-day operations and activities.

It is essential that everybody working within the Outcomes First Group understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors must ensure that staff who work directly with children read and understand Part 1 of [KCSIE September 2021](#). Staff who do not work directly with children can read and understand either Part one or Annex A if it is more effective to enable them to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All Outcomes First Group employees working directly or indirectly with children **must** ensure that:

- children and young people feel safe and that they are listened to;
- they create an environment and culture in which children and young people feel valued;
- the best interests of the child are always considered and acted upon;
- safer recruitment procedures are rigorously followed (please refer to the Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy for further details);
- they understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe through ongoing learning, development and supervision;
- they are vigilant in monitoring possible signs of abuse including for those children and young people who have complex learning difficulties or specific communication needs, who may be particularly vulnerable;
- they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**;
- they follow the appropriate procedures in place for sharing safeguarding concerns and that these are shared with relevant professionals in a timely manner;
- they understand and implement local safeguarding procedures as set out in local authority arrangements;
- children and young people have opportunity to learn about appropriate relationships with adults and recognise unacceptable behaviour by adults.
- they are aware that children can abuse other children (i.e. peer-on-peer abuse).
- there is a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, violence, abuse, inappropriate behaviour and bullying of any kind are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

## 2.0 What is safeguarding and child protection?

### 2.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and young people to protect them from harm. This policy includes the safeguarding of young adult learners within Outcomes First Group schools and other settings and applies both offline and online.



they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm.

## **2.8 Under s31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002:**

'harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

'health' means physical or mental health; and

'ill-treatment' includes Sexual Abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Abuse or neglect is not always easy to identify; staff are more than likely to have some information but not the whole picture.

## **2.9** There are four defined categories of child abuse, which are deemed to be forms of 'Significant Harm':

- Neglect;
- Physical Abuse;
- Emotional Abuse;
- Sexual Abuse.

## **2.10** It is also important to be aware that:

- technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.
- that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online.

## **2.11 All staff must be aware of the signs and indicators of child abuse.**

## **3.0 Local Arrangements for the school**

**3.1** All staff must be aware of the local arrangements for safeguarding relevant to the school in which they work;

**3.2** The local arrangements for .....school are as follows

**3.3** Maple Grove School's safeguarding arrangements are in line with local safeguarding partnership arrangements. The West Cheshire safeguarding partnership consists of the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police force in the local authority area)

**3.4** The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) arrangements in Cheshire West and Chester are on a rotation basis, comprising Child Protection Chairs within the Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Unit. The contact email is [safeguardinglado@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardinglado@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk). Additional information can be found here: <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Managing-Allegations-Procedure-March-2019.pdf>

**3.5** All safeguarding referrals must be reported to the local authority, via the Integrated Access and referral Team ([i-Art@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:i-Art@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)) , or the Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) on 0845 4580000. Referrals for children and young people under 18 will be dealt with under the Children’s safeguarding arrangements, whereas those 18 and above will be dealt with under the Adult Safeguarding Arrangements.

**3.6** The local authority safeguarding referral procedure is now part of the Pan-Cheshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Procedures. Local procedures are outlined below:

**Report**

If you have concerns about a child’s welfare, or feel that they may be being abused or neglected, please call the Integrated Access and Referral Team (I-ART) or the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) for help and advice.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Office hours: <b>0300 123 7047</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8.30am – 5pm (Monday – Thursday)</li> <li>• 8.30am – 4.30pm (Friday)</li> </ul> | <p>EDT Out of hours: <b>01244 977 277</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4.30pm – 8.30am (Monday – Thursday)</li> <li>• From 4pm (Friday)</li> <li>• 24 hours weekends and bank holidays</li> </ul> | <p>or Cheshire Police: <b>0845 458 0000</b> (999 in an emergency)</p> |
|--|---|---|

*Integrated access and referral team (iART)*

- Email (secure): [i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk)
- Email (ordinary): [i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)
- Opening hours: 8.30am to 5pm from Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 4.30pm Friday
- Telephone: 0300 123 7047

**Purpose of iART:**

The reviewed iART criteria aligns with the well-established Cheshire West and Chester Continuum of Need and outlines the role of the Integrated Access and Referral Team (iART) as follows:

1. To receive evidence based referrals for children in need of social work led intervention because there is a risk of significant harm to a child.
2. To provide advice on request for cases at Partnership Plus on the continuum of need where a TAF is not achieving outcomes or the case is on the point of escalating to enable a package of support from Early Help and Prevention Service (formerly IES).
3. To receive and respond to statutory notifications.

**This means that in the absence of an LSCB endorsed early help assessment (Team Around the Family being recommended and progressed) and an evidenced based referral which is supported by the use of an evidence based assessment tool, contacts will not be accepted into iART, with the exception of those that clearly meet threshold for statutory social work intervention.**

**The expectation is that professionals work with families to offer evidence based early support at the earliest possible time.**

*Emergency duty team (for out of hours emergencies)*

- Email (ordinary): [edt@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:edt@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)
- Telephone: 01244 977277

- Opening hours: 4.30 pm to 8.30 am from Monday to Thursday, from 4pm on Friday and 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays

Please note, the link to the Multi-agency referral form goes directly through to the iART team during working hours and will not be picked up by the Emergency Duty Team.

### *Important notes*

Emergency referrals should be telephoned through to the above numbers as appropriate.

Do not send any personal information about specific children or young people via the ordinary email addresses provided above but please ensure you use the electronic Multi-Agency Referral Form to send details of your referral.

As a professional contacting iART you have a responsibility to secure consent from families and/or individuals to confirm they are happy for their information to be shared. The law is clear consent must be specific, informed and freely given. On contacting iART a member of the team will explore this with you. There are some exceptions to this, for example if someone is at significant risk or to prevent crime and disorder. Please contact iART for advice if you are unsure.

The Council privacy notice provides information about how agencies in West Cheshire may use personal information. All agencies have to tell people how they might use information provided and give the choice to say yes or no to using that information. Professionals must share a copy of the [privacy notice](#) at every first visit and record this on eTAF.

### *Making a referral*

- [Online referral form for Integrated Access and Referral Team](#)

Professionals making a referral online must observe the following guidance:

- As many fields as possible should be completed. Some fields must be completed in order for the referral to proceed. The name, address and contact details of the person making the referral must be included

**Please note that the Multi-Agency Referral form will confirm whether you are a referring professional or a member of the public.**

- Online referrals are checked throughout the day on weekdays. The team aim to assess each referral within 1 working day and will respond on a priority basis. The Integrated Access and Referral Team (iART) will decide whether threshold is met to progress the referral either to Children's Social Care for a statutory social work assessment or to Early Help and Prevention, or whether threshold has not been met for the referral to progress and provide other information/advice/guidance.
- Individuals have a right by law to view records held about them. It is exceptional that information is withheld from a service user and this should be borne in mind when making an online referral. Please refer to the [privacy notice](#) for more information.

**Please note the above reference to the continuum of need and the purpose of iART as the integrated front door for Children's Social Care and Early Help and Prevention.**

### *What happens next?*

Online referrals will only be acknowledged where the referrer is the person concerned, the carer or a professional such as a GP, teacher or nurse. A decision as to next steps will be completed wherever possible within 1 working day.

### *Further information*

Further information can be found on the West Cheshire Local Safeguarding Children Board website.

- [Local Safeguarding Children Board](#)

**3.7** Referrals regarding radicalisation: staff should remain alert to the risks of extremism and radicalisation, and report any suspicions to the police:

Email: [CTPNW.Merseyside@merseyside.pnn.police.uk](mailto:CTPNW.Merseyside@merseyside.pnn.police.uk)

Telephone: [01606 365986](tel:01606365986)

#### **Documents**

[Prevent referral and assessment form \(Word, 34KB\)](#)

[Risk of Radicalisation Strategy \(PDF, 2MB\)](#)

[Channel awareness leaflet \(PDF, 673KB\)](#)

**3.8** For all referrals regarding child exploitation, staff (DSL) should complete the CWaC Safeguarding Children Partnership's Child Exploitation Screening Tool

**This single Child Exploitation tool should be used in any instance where you are concerned that a child is being exploited, through sexual or criminal means.** The tool should help you to identify and evaluate the cause of your concerns and reflect on whether further safeguarding investigations are needed. The tool should also be used to evidence improvement when professionals are working with a child and risk is assessed to be reduced. It can be used with parents, young people and other professionals. From the **1<sup>st</sup> October 2018** this new tool is the only one that should be used.

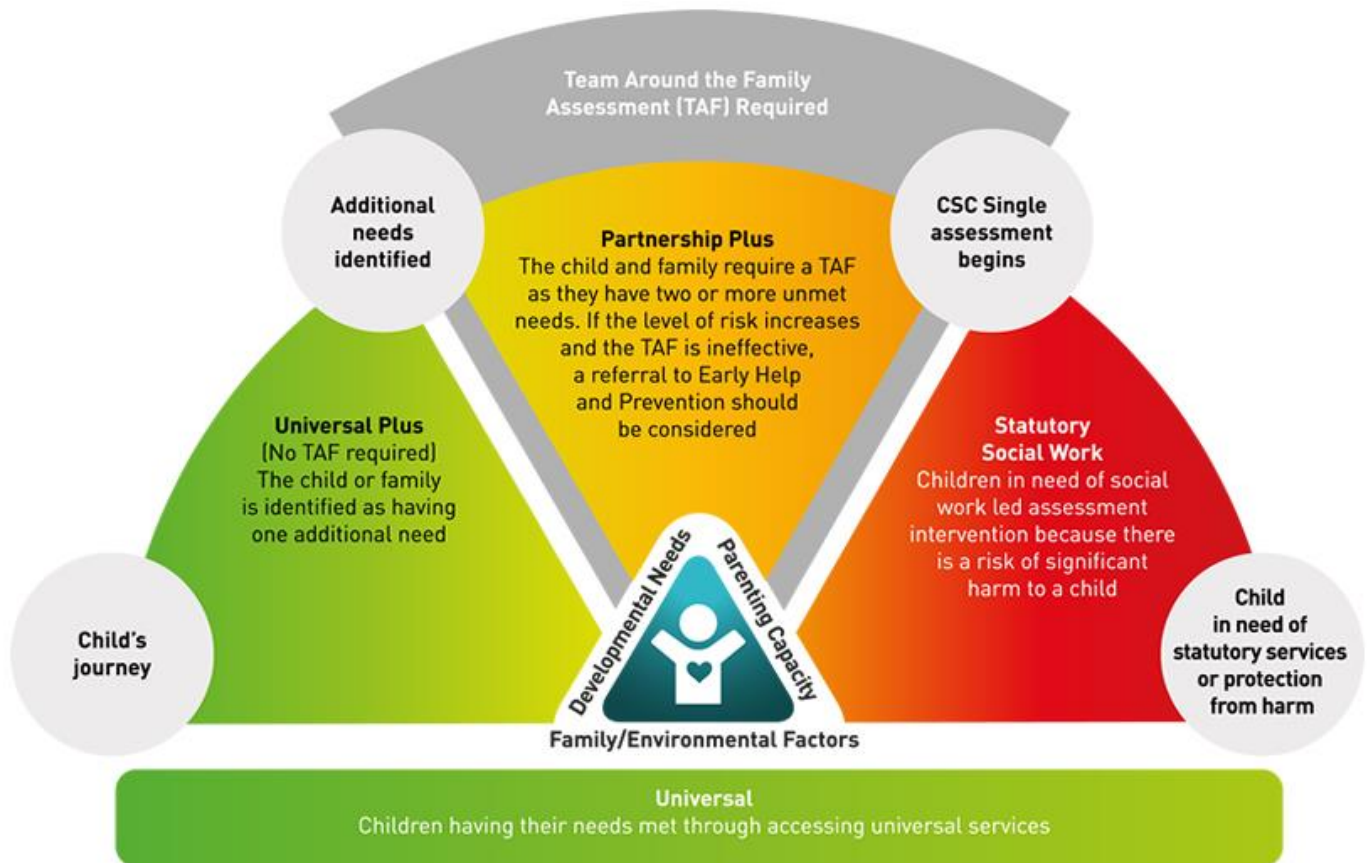
[Child Exploitation Assessment Tool Dec 2019](#) Children at risk of significant harm or in need of protection must be referred to i-ART and Children's Social Care. **The CE Screening Tool should be submitted alongside the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) to i-ART.**

As with all tools, they are most useful when they support best practice. Here is an example of a good quality completed tool.

[Example Pan Cheshire Tool CCE- August 2018](#)

**3.9** The local authority procedure for an early help referral is to follow the 'Continuum of Need', and contact i-Art if required





**3.10 Operation Encompass** is a service offered by police forces across England, whereby schools may be contacted in the event of police attending domestic abuse incidents at the home of one of their pupils. The Teacher helpline in such circumstances is **0204 5139990**

**3.11** The Outcomes First Group Head of Safeguarding can be contacted at: [anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk](mailto:anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk)

#### **4.0 The role of Senior Managers and Governor**

**4.1** Governors must have oversight of safeguarding policies and procedures and ensure that they are being effectively implemented within the school and that training is effective. In line with KCSIE (September 2021), which states that; '*Governing bodies and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take **leadership** responsibility for their schools or college's safeguarding arrangements*'. The named Governor for the school is Ann Henderson.

**4.2** Like teaching staff and volunteers, senior managers and Governors must be safely recruited and have all relevant checks on file. Please see the Group's Safer Recruitment Policy for further information.

- 4.3** It is the Governors' responsibility to ensure that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated Dec 2020).
- 4.4** Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This has to be balanced with their duty to protect the victim and other children.
- 4.5** Where the School premises are used for non-school/college activities and the services or activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of the school staff, the schools arrangements for child protection and safeguarding apply. Where service or activities are provided by another body, the School must seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place and ensure they will liaise with the school on these matters as appropriate.
- 5.0 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
- 5.1** *'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description.'* (KCSIE September 2021)
- 5.2** The Head Teacher must appoint one individual to be the lead DSL and make arrangements for there to be deputy DSL in place who will manage any immediate safeguarding incidents in the DSL's absence. The DSL must be an appropriate senior member of the leadership team and, along with deputies, will receive DSL training every two years.
- 5.3** The Head Teacher must ensure that job descriptions for DSL and Deputy DSLs are kept on personnel files and clearly state their responsibilities.
- 5.4** The DSL (or deputy) must always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any concerns.
- 5.5 The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are to:**
- provide support to staff regarding safeguarding concerns;
  - lead on advising staff of any action to be taken due to a safeguarding concern;
  - ensure that children and young people are immediately safeguarded from harm and abuse;
  - ensure that there is appropriate cover during their absence, and that staff know who to approach if the DSL is unavailable;
  - liaise with local authorities and other professionals, sharing information and fully assisting with any enquiries;
  - adopt a child-focused and holistic approach ensuring the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take
  - refer allegations to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent;
  - refer safeguarding concerns to placing and host local authorities;
  - refer suspected cases of radicalisation to Channel;
  - refer suspected case of Female Genital Mutilation to the police;









**7.4** Staff are in a close position to children and young people within schools as they know the children and young people. They have regular contact with them and so are in the best position to know if a child or young person is behaving in a way which could possibly indicate that they are being hurt or harmed. Any concerns, whether these are nagging doubts, worries, concerns or based on information told to them, must be reported immediately to the DSL both verbally and in writing. **It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that this information is acted upon. They have a duty to follow up with the DSL to ensure that action has been taken.**

## **8.0 Safer Recruitment**

**8.1** The Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy sets the processes which must be followed for the recruitment of staff and volunteers.

**8.2** It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that the Single Central Record is compliant with legislation and statutory guidance and kept up to date and is stored confidentially.

## **9.0 Early Help**

**9.1** *'A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989' (KCSIE September 2021)*

**9.2** It is important that staff take swift and effective action to safeguard children and young people and to stop concerns from escalating. It may be that some children and young people will benefit from Early Help. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

**9.3** Staff must be aware and alert to the possibility of Early Help being needed for those children and young people who have particular vulnerabilities, such as those who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- 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 at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

**9.4** Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm

**9.5** When a child or young person has been referred for Early Help, it is the responsibility of the DSL to set up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration must be given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

## **10.0 Reporting concerns**

### **10.1 What to do if a child or young person discloses**

Systems should be in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

If a child or young person discloses information to a member of staff, they must ensure that they:

- listen to the child or young person and reassure them they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- never give them the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. They must never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- do not dismiss what the child or young person tells them. All concerns must be acted upon rigorously;
- do not promise to keep it a secret. The member of staff must explain that they have a duty to share information to keep them safe and protect them;
- write down what the child or young person tells them. This must be accurate and in the child's words;
- immediately report the concerns to the DSL or deputy. If neither is available, the member of staff must report the information to the Head Teacher, Principal or Regional Director for Education and Care;

**10.2** Staff must be alert to not just potential familial abuse and allegations, but also to children and young people making allegations against staff, volunteers or peers. In these situations the Group's Managing Allegation Procedures must be followed. (See Section 24 for further details)

- 10.3** All concerns, however small or trivial they may seem, **must** be immediately reported to the DSL. This must be done verbally and then followed up **on the same day** and documented on the electronic recording system. The member of staff has a responsibility to ensure that action has been taken with regards to the concerns on the **following day** and that the concern is documented on the electronic system. If action is not taken in a timely way as the member of staff sees fit, they have a duty to escalate their concerns to the Head Teacher or the Regional Director for Education and Care.
- 10.4** Staff must prioritise the child or young person's immediate safety. They must remain professional and adhere to all safeguarding and confidentiality procedures. After sharing the information with the DSL or deputy, they must not share it with anyone else.
- 10.5** On receipt of the information, the DSL must consider all information and then, in cases of serious concern, report this within **one working day** to the host authority, placing authority, Regional Director for Education and care and where relevant, the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- 11.0 Managing Referrals to DBS and professional bodies**
- 11.1** This may include referrals to Disclosure and Barring Service, Social Work England, or other professional bodies including the Care Council for Wales (CCW), and/or the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) or Teacher Regulation Authority.
- 11.2** A Sub-Committee of the Outcomes First Group Safeguarding & Quality Committee takes an overview of all professional conduct issues to ensure the Group is compliant and consistent with all legal duties relating to referrals to professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 11.3** Outcomes First Group managers must notify the Safeguarding Sub-Committee of all referrals and potential referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service or any relevant professional body in the UK.
- 11.4** All professional conduct issues which may require a referral to a professional body, whether they relate to safeguarding children or not, must be referred to this sub-committee. For example, a teacher may be prohibited from teaching for a wide range of reasons which do not relate to the safety of children or young people.
- 11.5** The Safeguarding Sub-Committee will support the decision-making process to refer an employee to a professional body and/or DBS and make it clear who is responsible for the submission of any relevant documentation. This will normally be delegated to a senior manager within the division.
- 11.6** If an employee is dismissed from employment due to a safeguarding concern or allegation, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or relevant government body in Scotland or Northern Ireland must be made. **It is an offence not to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales.**
- 11.7** If a DBS referral is made, at the point of completion Outcomes First Group managers must notify the Group Head of Safeguarding and the Human Resources Operations Advisor of



the referral and any other possible referrals to any relevant professional body in the United Kingdom, relating to the allegation made.

- 11.8** Where a teacher is dismissed or their services are no longer used because of serious misconduct or might have been dismissed or services ceased to be used had they not left first, they must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

## **12.0 Partnership working and sharing information**

- 12.1** Partnership working and the sharing of information is key in keeping children safe. Everyone who has a role to play in caring for children has a duty to share good quality information with the relevant professionals in a timely manner.

## **12.2 General Data Protection Regulations**

All schools must ensure that they comply with the Outcomes First Group's Data Protection policy which incorporates the GDPR requirements. The GDPR works around the principles of consent and assumes the automatic right of privacy to all individuals. This applies to children and young people's personal information, as well as that of staff and parents/carers.

**The GDPR is not a barrier to sharing safeguarding information. Safeguarding concerns must always be passed on.** It is not necessary to seek consent to share information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child provided that there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required.

**All staff must complete the GDPR training. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the GDPR requirements.**

- 12.3** Schools must ensure that they inform pupils, parents and carers of how their personal information will be stored and used.
- 12.4** Schools must ensure that they hold emergency contact details of the parents/carers of pupils. This is to be done with the agreement of the parents/carers. In line with KCSIE (September 2021) schools must hold more than one set of contact details for each pupil, where reasonably possible.
- 12.5** Data breaches must be reported immediately to the Data Protection manager as set out in the Data Protection Policy.

## **13.0 Peer on Peer Abuse**

- 13.1** It is essential that all staff understand that abuse is abuse and the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. In addition to the information below, staff should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes First Group's **Peer-on- Peer abuse Policy**.

KCSIE (September 2021) states: **"Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of**

**growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.”**

- 13.2** Staff must ensure that they create a school environment where children and young people's safety is paramount and where unacceptable or unsafe behaviour is not tolerated. Staff must be aware and alert to incidents of online abuse between children, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images, sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils and bullying. This includes upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Staff must be alert to possible signs of peer-on-peer abuse. Inappropriate language must be rigorously and consistently challenged.
- 13.3** All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' and be vigilant to any signs.

It is important that staff are aware that children may not find it easy to tell an adult about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

**13.4 Staff must act immediately and report any concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse to the DSL.**

- 13.5** Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:
- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
  - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
  - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
  - sexual harassment, e.g. sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
  - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent,
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos
  - upskirting
  - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group)

These forms of abuse can happen inside or outside of school both offline and online.

- 13.6** A contextual safeguarding approach must be taken when considering possible peer-on-peer abuse. Children and young people who display harmful behaviours must be seen as potential victims themselves, and the wider environmental risks must be taken into account. Staff must challenge any gender bias or derogatory language used by staff or

pupils. Staff must not dismiss any concerns brought to them by pupils. Staff can report concerns verbally, but they must ensure that all concerns are recorded onto the schools Electronic recording system by the end of the school day.

- 13.7** When making decisions about how to deal with allegations, the age and understanding of the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour must be taken into consideration, as well as any relevant personal circumstances and how this relates to their behaviour. Schools must consider any disparity in age between the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour and the victim, the impact the behaviour has had on the victim, and any element of coercion or violence.
- 13.8** DSL must deal with any concerns of peer-on-peer abuse immediately and sensitively. As much information as possible must be gathered from the victim and the young person who has allegedly displayed harmful behaviour in order to gain the facts of what has happened.
- 13.9** The language used must be sensitive, non-judgemental and must not blame the victim. Victims must be supported and reassured that their safety and welfare within the school is the priority. Risk assessments must be implemented where necessary.
- 13.10** Where the DSL believes that there has been significant harm caused to the pupil, a referral must be made to the local authority immediately. In agreement with the local authority, parents/carers must be informed. Where possible, as best practice, parents/carers are to be informed face to face.
- 13.11** If the local authority does not believe it meets their threshold for further action and the DSL is not in agreement, this must be challenged with the local authority.
- 13.12 After the outcome/conclusion of the incident:**
- a contextual safeguarding approach must be taken;
  - schools must take all necessary action to learn from the incident and prevent future incidents from occurring, such as through targeted education around specific types of peer-on-peer abuse;
  - support for the victim must be offered and provided where possible. Appropriate risk assessments must be implemented to provide reassurance and safety for the victim;
  - schools must ensure that they **do not** adopt a victim blaming approach;
  - the DSL must complete an investigation into the incident; The investigation must consider the incident itself as well as whether it is an isolated incident, and the personal circumstances of the young person who is alleged to have displayed harmful behaviour;
  - if necessary, appropriate referrals must be made to support services for the young person who has displayed harmful behaviours;
  - a risk assessment must be completed and implemented for the young person who has displayed harmful behaviours in order to safeguard them and other pupils.

## **14.0 Bullying**

- 14.1** Severe or persistent forms of bullying can result in Significant Harm, which is why those providing services for children should have adequate policies, procedures and training to counter bullying. Bullying occurs when a person or group of people behave in ways which are designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people. Bullying can be overt



## 16.0 Online Safety

**16.1** There is a whole school approach to online safety to help equip pupils with knowledge and understanding to stay safe online. The school helps and supports its pupils to recognise and avoid online safety risks and to help build their digital resilience. This is integrated into everyday learning and covered in detail as part of the RSHE curriculum. There are a range of resources to provide support for online safety in schools at:  
<https://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals>

**16.2** The Outcomes First Group requires safe and secure systems to be put in place within schools that limits the exposure to such risks. Please see the Group Web Filtering Policy that is updated for schools each year and the Group's Staying Safe Online Policy.

KCSIE (September 2021) states that the school should have a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology. Schools are required to develop a local policy.

**16.3 If a member of staff has reason to believe that a child or young person is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm, the reporting process set out in this policy in Section 10 must be followed immediately.**

**16.4** If staff become aware of an online incident that is a cause for concern, they should:

- Provide reassurance to the child or adult.
- Take immediate action to report any criminal offences to the police and social care.
- Inform the child or adult's placing authority and family as appropriate.
- Review the supervision and support arrangements for the child accessing the internet.
- Check the privacy and security settings on the child's devices and account.
- Agree what action will be taken to prevent recurrence and reduce risk, the risk assessment should be reviewed and updated. Further online safety learning requirements should be considered for the child.

**16.5** Digital technology and its related risks are developing rapidly. An annual review of the school's approach to online safety will take place, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks children face. A free online safety self-review tool for schools can be found at <https://360safe.org.uk/>

**16.6** The UKCIS external visitors' guidance highlights a range of resources which can support educational settings to further develop a whole school approach towards online safety:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-external-visitors-to-support-online-safety-education-guidance-for-educational-settings>

## 17.0 Children Missing Education

**17.1** All staff must be aware of the risks associated with children who go missing from education, and particularly that very often missing incidents are a warning sign of other safeguarding concerns such as exploitation, forced marriage, FGM, substance misuse or mental health problems. The risk of exploitation and abuse increases for those children and young people who go missing from home and school.

Early identification and intervention is a priority. Schools must have appropriate procedures in place for monitoring the attendance of children and young people in school. Attendance must be monitored through Senior Leadership Team Meetings and Governance.

- 17.2** The DSL must contact the main emergency contact as detailed on the pupil's file should there be concerns regarding the pupil missing education.

Staff must report all unauthorised absences to the DSL, who must make contact with the child or young person's parent/carer immediately to establish the child or young person's whereabouts. The DSL must inform the placing authority of a pupil's poor attendance.

- 17.3** The DSL is responsible for investigating any unexplained absences. Reasonable enquiries must be made to locate a child or young person who is missing from education. The DSL **must** refer any safeguarding concerns regarding the absence of a pupil to the local authority. Cases where there are concerns regarding forced marriage or FGM must be referred to the police immediately. All information **must** be documented appropriately.

- 17.4** Children and young people who are repeatedly missing from education are at particular risk of harm. Attempts must be made to talk to the child or young person about why they are missing from education. Records must be kept of those discussions. Any safeguarding information which the child or young person discloses must be shared **immediately** with the local authority. If the child or young person discloses immediate safeguarding concerns, the DSL must share this information with the police.

## **18.0 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

- 18.1** Exploitation of children and young people is a form of child abuse and can include sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation. This occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and /or for financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

- 18.2** CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that both boys and girls can be at risk of criminal exploitation. Both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

- 18.3** Schools must write and implement a local exploitation procedure which staff must be familiar with. All staff **must** read Outcomes First Group's Exploitation policy as well as refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021).

- 18.4** All staff **must** know the definitions, signs and indicators of CSE, CCE and County Lines. DSL must provide ongoing training and learning to staff around exploitation. All staff **must** have training in exploitation.

- 18.5** Staff **must** report any concerns regarding exploitation **immediately** to the DSL and document their concerns appropriately **on the same day**. Where there are immediate concerns relating to children and young people's safety due to exploitation, DSLs must



make a same day referral to the local authority and report the concerns to the police as well as to the Regional Director for Education and Care.

- 18.6** Where there are low level concerns, i.e. where the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold of harm, the DSL must document the concerns on a chronology in order to establish a full picture of what is happening for the child or young person.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, but does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent. Examples may include but are not limited to: being over friendly with children; having favourites; engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

- 18.7** It is everyone's responsibility to help children and young people know about grooming and exploitation. Schools must ensure that children and young people know who to talk to if they have any concerns for themselves or other children.

## **19.0 Serious violence**

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

- 19.2** All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Further guidance for professionals can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

## **20.0 Female Genital Mutilation**

- 20.1** In line with KCSIE (September 2021), teachers have a legal duty to share concerns regarding FGM; 'If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police'. In suspected cases of FGM, staff must refer to the local authority as well as the police. The DSL will assist and support staff with this.

**20.2** Staff must read and be familiar with statutory guidance regarding reporting FGM 'FGM Fact sheet': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet>

**20.3** The DSL must ensure that immediate concerns regarding potential abuse, harm, honour-based abuse including FGM, forced marriage and breast ironing, CSE and Trafficking or Radicalisation are shared **immediately** with the relevant Regional Director for Education and Care (and Chair of Governors) and that staff have documented them appropriately.

## **21.0 Preventing Radicalisation**

**21.1** Outcomes First Group fully recognises its responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children from radicalisation. Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory responsibility on schools to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the 'Prevent' duty.

**21.2** All staff must be aware of the signs and indicators of radicalisation. Staff must be proactive in reporting any concerns, regardless of how small they may be, to the DSL who must assist staff to report all concerns regarding radicalisation to the Police as well as the Regional Director for Education and Care. Staff must document their concerns appropriately.

**21.3** All staff must be aware of the local procedures relating to reporting radicalisation concerns.

## **22.0 Children Requiring Support with their Mental Health**

**22.1** Outcomes First Group recognises that schools have an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Mental ill-health can be an indicator of a child suffering or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All schools should have systems in place for identifying mental health problems and referring to appropriate agencies for additional support. This will ordinarily be with the consent of the child and their family. All details of concerns and any referrals or other support arranged for the child should be documented on the schools electronic recording system.

**22.2** Schools can refer to the Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance (2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2> The guidance provides advice on how to create a whole school culture in promoting positive mental health outcomes for children and young people.

## **23.0 Physical Interventions**

**23.1** While every school creates an atmosphere of nurturing, unconditional positive regard and warmth, Outcomes First Group recognises that on occasion it may be necessary to use physical intervention to keep a child or young person safe. Physical intervention must be a last resort and must always be proportionate. Once the child is safe and calm, it is essential that there is a debrief with the child. It should be an open discussion with the member of staff encouraging the child to talk about how they feel and understand what happened.



The intervention and the follow-up action must be recorded on the School's Electronic Recording System.

### **23.2 All staff must read and know the school's individual Physical Intervention Policy.**

**23.3** If a child or young person makes an allegation after a physical intervention, it is important that the member of staff writes down as much information as possible. Staff must complete body maps immediately after the event and make an appropriate electronic record. Staff must also verbally inform the DSL (or deputy) as well as recording it onto the schools electronic recording system. **Medical attention must always be sought for the young person.** Staff must inform their parents or carers. Allegations of harm relating to physical interventions must be reported to the Regional Director for Education and Care, the Group Head of Safeguarding ([anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk](mailto:anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk)) Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent.

### **24.0 Allegations against Staff**

**24.1** An allegation is any concern, complaint or disclosure that indicates a member of staff, agency staff or volunteer or has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or relate to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

**24.2** All allegations must be treated seriously. Staff must maintain an open mind and suspend all judgement. Allegations must never be dismissed. When managing allegations, it is important that staff maintain a level of professional curiosity. Staff have a responsibility to look after themselves and not to place themselves into situations which could present as unsafe. Staff must report any concerns to the Regional Director for Education and Care and the DSL.

**24.3** When a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, the member of staff receiving the complaint must:

- write everything down and document it on the electronic recording system used by the school.
- immediately report the allegation to the DSL (or deputy).

The DSL must:

- take all allegations seriously regardless of whether a child or young person has made previous allegations and can speak to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent and seek advice about next steps on the same day.
- Must report allegations to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent within one working day.
- Ensure that they follow the Outcomes First Group's Managing Allegations Procedure.

- 24.4** Part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) outlines the importance of retaining oversight of any concerns or allegations about agency or supply staff, volunteers or any member of staff employed by a third party working in the school setting. Whilst the individual may not be employed by Outcomes First Group, **schools must ensure** that allegations are managed properly. KCSIE (September 2021) states *'In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the supply agency or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools of colleges, whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school or college, whilst they carry out their investigation.'*
- 24.5** If the allegation is regarding the Head Teacher/Principal then the Regional Director for Education and Care must be informed immediately. They will then seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent).
- 24.6** **All allegations made against staff must be reported to the Regional Director for Education and Care and HR and the Group Head of Safeguarding, and to [safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk). Outcomes First Group recognises that managing allegations can be challenging and so will support with the process.**
- 24.7** It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that all allegations are managed in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures.
- 25.0 Working with the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent)**
- 25.1** In all referrals, the DSL is the lead professional within the school for ensuring that a timely response is received from the local authority. If a response is received which the DSL believes is inappropriate and does not prioritise the child or young person's safety, this must be escalated to the Head Teacher or Governors of the school to agree further action.
- 26.0 Whistleblowing**
- 26.1** Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Outcomes First Group recognises that on occasion staff may feel that they are unable to tell someone within their immediate place of work about any safeguarding concerns that they may have. The Group also recognises that children will be unable to voice their concerns if they are in an environment where staff also fail to voice their concerns.
- 26.2** All staff have a duty first and foremost to the children in their school. Any concerns, regardless of how small they may seem, must be reported. DSLs and Head Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that they create an environment where staff feel safe to openly voice any concerns and feel listened to. It is also important that staff feel supported if concerns are raised about them. If staff see or hear about other colleagues' practice which they are concerned about, which potentially may cause emotional or physical harm to a pupil, or if the standard of care being provided falls short of expectations, they must report this.







