

# Whitecross Hereford: High School & Specialist Sports College

Policy: Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures

Reviewed by: *Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development*

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## 1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

## 2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children board, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- [Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, 2018.](#)
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory [guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads, May 2018](#)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association. We work closely with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub to ensure that our policies reflect their procedures.

### 3. Definitions

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

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

**Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

### 4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are known to be suffering with mental health issues
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers

### 5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

#### 5.1 All staff

All staff will read and understand part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including the staff code of conduct and the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

- The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children’s social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation
- The wider importance of considering wider environmental factors in a child’s life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare i.e. contextual safeguarding

Section 12 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

### **5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

Our DSL is Alex Tootell. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

*The DSL can be contacted out of school hours via email using [atootell@whitecross.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:atootell@whitecross.hereford.sch.uk).*

When the DSL is absent, the deputies –Lorraine Lewis and Michelle Giampalma – will act as cover. If the DSL and deputies are not available, Tim Knapp, Headteacher, Rob Patterson, Deputy Headteacher or Mark Desborough, Deputy Headteacher will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities). In addition the Assistant SenCo is also trained to DSL level.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children’s social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in their job description.

### **5.3 The governing board**

The governing board will approve this policy at each review, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will appoint a link governor (Charlotte Thomas) to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

The chair of governors will act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

## 5.4 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Ensuring that children are taught about Safeguarding, including on line, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- Ensuring that the curriculum will implement sex and relationship teaching and make best use of PSHE to cover Safeguarding issues with children

## 6. Confidentiality

Whitecross school believes that;

- 'The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.' and that 'This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.' Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.
- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Information must be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis, but you do not need consent to share information if a child is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 11, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3
- Confidentiality is also addressed in the Information Sharing Policy

## 7. Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

### 7.1 If a child is in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

At Whitecross we follow the following three steps as laid out by the HSCB;

[\(https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/herefordshire-safeguarding-children-board/for-professionals/three-steps-to-safeguard-children/\)](https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/herefordshire-safeguarding-children-board/for-professionals/three-steps-to-safeguard-children/)

- Take action in line with the levels of need

If you are concerned about a child and feel they need further safeguarding support, check the [Herefordshire Levels of Need Threshold Guidance](#). This document provides clearly defined descriptors of need which are intended to support practitioners in identifying need and appropriate intervention. Take action in line with the Levels of Need.

If it is necessary to make an immediate referral in line with level 4 of the Levels of Need you should call them (see our worried about a Child page: <https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/herefordshire-safeguarding-children-board/report-concerns-about-a-child/>). You will also need to go to [www.westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/](http://www.westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/) to download:

- HSCB's Multi-Agency Referral Form for MASH referrals.
- Standards and guidance for multi-agency referrals to children's social care.
- Get support from the MASH

Having read the Levels of Need, if you are still not sure what action is appropriate, please contact our team of safeguarding experts at the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub brings together safeguarding professionals from children's social care, police, probation, health, education and Women's Aid in one office so that they can share information and work together on all safeguarding concerns.

When someone refers a case to children's social care, the MASH staff gather information from every agency and use this to inform children's social care's decision about the most appropriate intervention to respond to the child's identified needs. The MASH team can immediately trigger a response when required which means they are able to respond to a child's needs quickly and effectively.

To speak to someone in the MASH about appropriate actions to take in a case, you can call them on 01432 260800.

More information about the MASH, including a short storyboard example of how the MASH works to safeguard families and children, is available at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/MASH](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/MASH).

If you would like one (or more) of HSCB's MASH reference cards, like the one above, please get in touch with HSCB's Business Unit.

- Resolution of Professional Disagreements

Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the decision made by a worker from another agency on a child protection or child in need case is not a safe decision. The safety of individual children is the paramount consideration in any professional disagreement and any unresolved issues should be addressed with due consideration to the risks that might exist for the child.

All workers should feel able to challenge decision-making and to see this as their right and responsibility in order to promote the best multi-agency safeguarding practice. This procedure provides a means to raise concerns about decisions made by other professionals or agencies by:

- a) avoiding professional disputes that put children at risk or obscure the focus on the child
- b) resolving the difficulties within and between agencies quickly and openly

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies. Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children.

This additional guidance has been produced to support 3.8 of the [West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures](#) for resolution of professional disagreements.

The following link can be used for reporting child abuse to the local council:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

## 7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so

## 7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4.

**Any teacher** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

The duty above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

**Any other member of staff** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

**Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

At Whitecross school we follow the procedures laid out by HSCB

(<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/news/fgm-update/>) and Home Office Guidance on Mandatory Reporting of FGM – procedural information (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>).

## 7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger)

Figure 1 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare and the child is not in immediate danger.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly (see 'Referral' below).

You can also contact the charity NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 if you need advice on the appropriate action.

### **Early help**

If early help is appropriate, the DSL will support you in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

### **Referral**

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

### **7.5 If you have concerns about extremism**

If a child is not at immediate risk of harm, where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly if appropriate (see 'Referral' above).

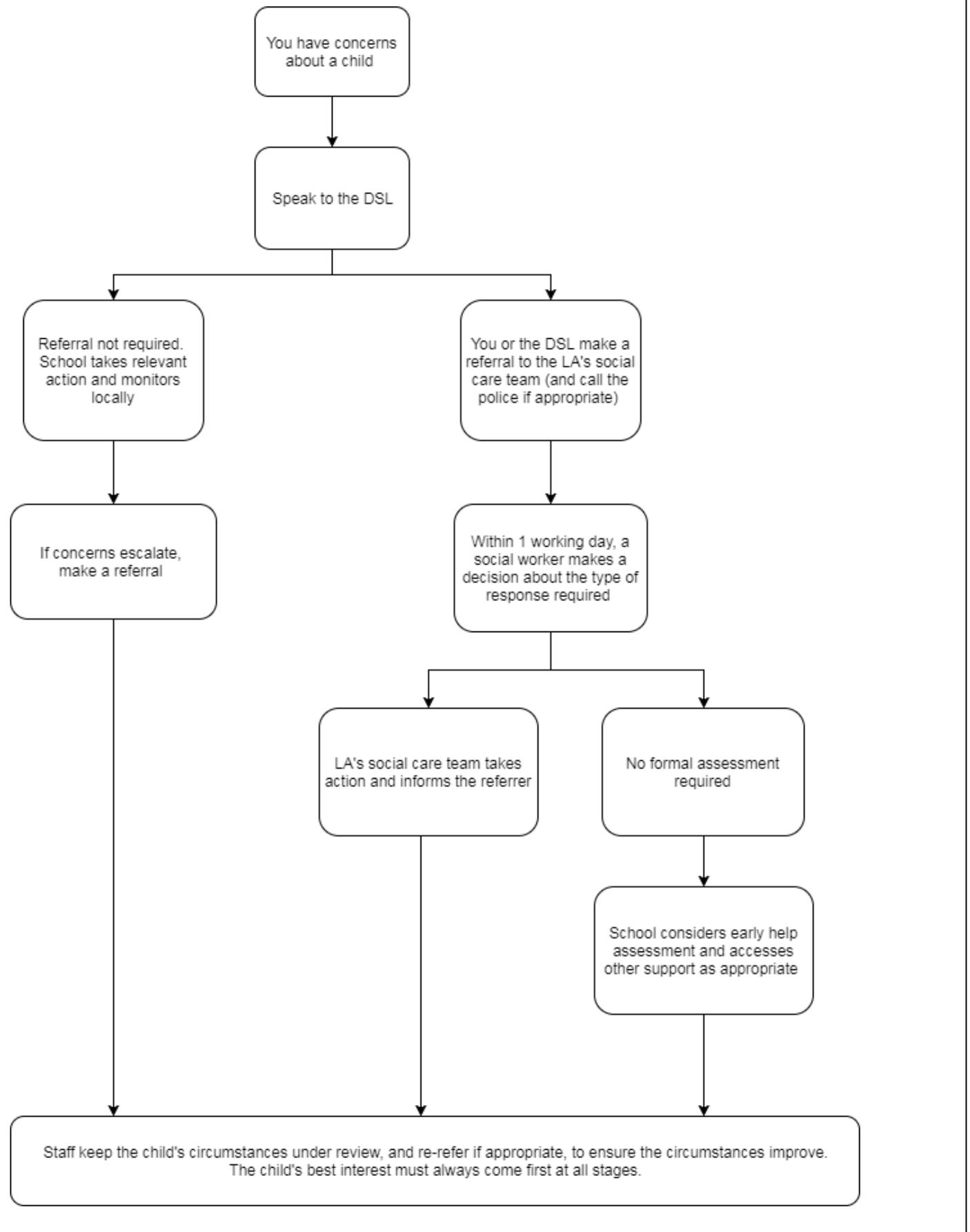
Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, that school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

**Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (no immediate danger)**



### **7.6 Concerns about a staff member or volunteer**

If you have concerns about a member of staff or volunteer, speak to the headteacher. If you have concerns about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

You can also discuss any concerns about any staff member or volunteer with the DSL.

The headteacher/chair of governors/DSL will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

### **7.7 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils**

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Our policy considers UKCCIS: Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people (2017).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/609874/6\\_2939\\_SP\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_In\\_Schools\\_FINAL\\_Update\\_Jan17.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609874/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf)

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must tell the DSL and record the allegation, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by specific reference to it in SRE CCD day sessions. Form tutors ensure that tutees are aware.
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

## **8. Notifying parents**

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

## **9. Mobile phones and cameras**

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras. Please refer to the staff code of conduct for further details.

We will follow the Data Protection Act 1998 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

Please also refer to the 'digital devices' section of the school Behaviour and Exclusion policy.

## **10. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding practices**

### **10.1 Complaints against staff**

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

### **10.2 Other complaints**

Other safeguarding complaints such as those made about pupils or the premises will be referred to the Headteacher who will liaise with the Chair of Governors to carry out an investigation. This may be delegated to an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The school will reply in writing, or by telephone, within 15 working days from when the complaint is received. If it is not possible to fully respond within this time, the school will advise the complainant and explain when a full reply can be expected.

Whitecross will always acknowledge where things could have been done better and inform the relevant people of what will be done to avoid the same thing happening again. Equally, if we don't agree with a complaint we will inform all relevant parties of why.

### **10.3 Whistle-blowing**

Please refer to the separate whistle blowing policy.

## 11. Record-keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL or deputy DSL's. These records will be made using the school software MyConcern. Staff will log all concerns to MyConcern which

will keep an electronic, chronological copy of all concerns raised.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

Further information:

- All files are recorded on My Concern or in students confidential file.
- The records are kept in a locked cabinet, in a locked welfare office.
- Information is retained for the entirety of the students stay at the school and are kept until the end of the following year of leaving.
- After this they are stored at the Council offices.
- Information is shared with other agencies using the secure email service AnyComms.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks
- Appendix 4 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

## 12. Training

### 12.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from our local safeguarding children board.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

### 12.2 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

### **12.3 Governors**

All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

### **12.4 Recruitment – interview/appointment panels**

At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education’s statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

## **13. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed **annually** Alex Tootell, Assistant Headteacher, DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

## **14. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour & Exclusion
- Staff grievance and staff conduct
- Complaints procedure
- Health and safety (including first aid)
- Attendance
- Sex and relationship education
- Curriculum
- Anti-Bullying
- Equality information and objectives
- SEN
- Supporting students with medical conditions
- Data Protection
- Freedom of information
- Allegations of abuse against staff
- Whistleblowing

**These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.**

## **Appendix 1: types of abuse**

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

**Abuse:** *a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.*

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

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

**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
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

**Animal abuse** is the intentional harm of an animal. It includes, but is not limited to, wilful neglect, inflicting injury, pain or distress, or malicious killing of animals.

There is increasing research and clinical evidence which suggests that there are sometimes inter-relationships, commonly referred to as 'links', between the abuse of children, vulnerable adults and animals. A better understanding of these links can help to protect victims, both human and animal, and promote their welfare.

## Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

### Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

### Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)

- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#)
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

### **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

### **Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

### **Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

### **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity

### **Governors**

All trustees and local governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board of trustees will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All trustees, proprietors and local governors will have the following checks:

- Section 128 direction *[only required for local governors if they have been delegated any management responsibilities]*
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

#### **Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

#### **Pupils staying with host families**

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

### **Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff**

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

This guidance relates to members of staff who are *currently* working in the school regardless of whether it is the school where the alleged abuse took place.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.

Whitecross Hereford, as an employer has a duty of care to its employees. It ensures that it provides effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provides the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in the school is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Full details of our procedures for dealing with such cases can be found in the separate “Allegations of Abuse Made Against Teacher and Other Staff” policy.

## Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

### Children missing from education

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

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Our procedure is based upon the protocol provided by the HSCB and includes making a CME referral after 10 consecutive days of absence. During this time we will always carry out investigations to locate the pupil. If there are any safeguarding concerns or if a child is known to social services we will make a referral to MASH immediately.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/cme>

<https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/children-missing-education-referral-form-herefordshire>

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

### Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Child sexual exploitation. Definition and guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation, February 2017)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/591903/CSE\\_Guidance\\_Core\\_Document\\_13.02.2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CSE_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf)

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate. Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

### **FGM**

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
  - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
  - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
  - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
  - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
  - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
  - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
  - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
  - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
  - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out

- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
  - Having limited level of integration within UK society
  - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
  - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
  - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
  - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
  - Being unexpectedly absent from school
  - Having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

### **Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the ‘one chance’ rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority’s designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk)
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

### **Preventing radicalisation**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk. At Whitecross school we use Educare software to support this training.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding children board and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including PHSE lessons (Year 8 British Values scheme of work) and collective worship policy.

## **The criminal exploitation of children: County Lines**

Signs which may indicate criminal exploitation:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts /phone calls
- Relationships with controlling /older individuals or groups
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault /unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

Criminal exploitation of children is a Safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will seek advice from agencies and professionals; including, reference to the Safeguarding procedures as outlined by the local authority. This will mean a referral into the Police and Social Care. The school will offer support to a victim.

### **Carrying knives/offensive Weapons & Gang Culture**

Bringing and carrying a knife/offensive weapon onto school/college premises is a criminal offence and immediate action will be taken by calling the police and informing the informed. The guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation for Head teachers, schools and Governors, January 2018 will be consulted and the school will consider and may apply the disciplinary procedure.

If a member of staff suspects a pupil/student being involved in gang culture, this is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will seek advice from agencies and professionals including reference to the Safeguarding procedures as outlined by the local authority. The student may be an exploited child and victim to which the school will offer support.

### **Checking the identity and suitability of visitors**

The following guidelines should ensure that we also safeguard our students from other adults and in situations that expose them to risks that are beyond the close control of our own staff.

- All staff on site must have an enhanced DBS clearance, which must be renewed every three years. A log of this is held centrally by the Business Manager;
- All visitors must sign in at reception, wear a badge and (with the exception of governors) be supervised by one of our staff whilst on site;
- Local Authority Personnel should be wearing photographic ID with the council logo;
- When staff have invited a visitor onsite, they must let reception know that they are expected and arrange to have them collected;
- If a visitor is to work with students, it is the responsibility of the organising member of staff to discuss safeguarding with them and to complete a risk assessment. (forms available on StaffShare)The risk assessment must be completed and returned to the Business Manager;
- If someone is coming regularly to site and will be working with students without staff supervision, they must have an enhanced DBS. They will fall into one of the following three categories:

- They are employed to undertake similar work in a Herefordshire Council institution and already have an enhanced DBS, which is dated within the last three years. In this case staff need to complete the risk assessment form designed for this purpose, and include the number of the DBS. Staff must have seen the original disclosure and not a copy.
- They undertake similar work in another organisation (eg- rugby coach) and have an enhanced DBS which is less than 6 months old. In this case, staff need to complete the risk assessment form designed for this purpose and include the number of the DBS. Staff must have seen the original disclosure and not a copy.
- They are neither of the above and we will need to complete a new enhanced DBS even if they have one already from their current position.

Under all the above circumstances, staff must also see some photo ID so that the identity of the visitor has been confirmed. This information must also be logged in the central record with the Bursar. If any staff see someone on site who is not known to them and who is not wearing an ID badge, it is reasonable for the member of staff to challenge the stranger.

We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

#### **Non-collection of children**

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

Ensure that the child is kept safe until Parents or Guardians can be contacted.

Discuss with the parents or guardians the reason for non-collection and establish that the child is safe to go home.

#### **Missing pupils -**

Our procedures for students who go missing from school after being registered present are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:

- Check with Reception that the student has not been signed out.
- Notify a member of the SLT that a student is missing (noting the time).
- A nominated member of staff (SLT/ Strategy Group/ Attendance Officer) will contact the student's parents to inform them that their son/daughter is missing from school. If it is not possible to contact the parents then attempts will be made to contact other contacts listed on SIMS. (Note: The school always requests and records on SIMS at least two contact numbers for every student where reasonably possible.)
- Evidence will gathered within school to ascertain possible whereabouts of the student (for example, speaking to friends within school).
- If contact is made with the student's parents then the nominated member of staff will inform them that their child is missing and advise them to make their own enquiries regarding his/her whereabouts and to then contact the police and report them as a missing person.
- If attempts to contact parents or members of the extended family are unsuccessful then the nominated member of staff will contact the police. Any known concerns such as vulnerability, medical issues, Social Care issues or other relevant issues will be shared.