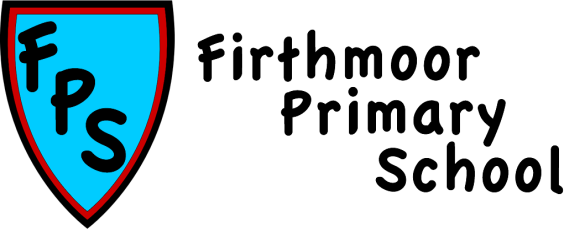
**FIRTHMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date policy approved | October 2020 |
| Review frequency | Annual |
| Review date | October 2021 |

In all cases of actual or suspected abuse the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed and the relevant Local Authority Child Protection Procedures followed – these are online procedures, which are regularly updated - Telephone Children’s Access Point : 01325 406222 or complete the [Multi Agency Referral Form](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/children-safeguarding-board/concerned-about-a-child/) and send by secure email to [childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk)

within one working day.

All information can be can be accessed through the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership website: <http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/children-safeguarding-board/concerned-about-a-child/>

**Roles and Responsibilities for the current Academic Year:**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Mrs Ann Dixon – Headteacher

**Deputy Safeguarding Leads** Mrs Victoria Morrow – Deputy Headteacher

Mrs Dawn Kilpatrick – Inclusion officer

**Designated Safeguarding Governor** Mrs Pat Irving

**Chair of Governors** Mr Bill Paton

**External Agencies**

The LA Safeguarding Boards’ Business Manager: Emma Chawner Tel: 01325 406459

The LA Education Safeguarding Officer: Joanna Conway Tel: 01325 405848

Children's Access Point: Telephone: 01325 406222

E-mail: [childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk)

Emergency Duty Team: 01642 524552

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Tel: 01325 742020

Designated Officers – allegations against staff

Amanda Hugill, Business Manager 01325 406452

Marion Garland, Safeguarding Board Development Officer 01325 406452

**Prevent Key contacts**

For concerns about children the DSL/SPOC should inform the Children’s Access Point on 01325 406222 or email: [childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk). For concerns about an adult at risk the Designated Lead/SPOC should inform Adult Social Care on 01325 406111 or e-mail [ssact@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:ssact@darlington.gov.uk)

**Prevent Team**

Contact Police on 0191 375 2234 (office hours)

Non-urgent enquiries 101, Emergency calls 999

**To report illegal information, pictures or videos** found on the internet [www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism). Anti-terrorist Hotline: 0800 789 321

**Preventing extremism in schools and children's services:** Helpline - 020 7340 7264 or email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). For education staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly and in confidence or if you are concerned about extremism in a school or organisation that works with children, or if you think a child might be at risk of extremism.

CHANNEL Panel Chair

Jo Benson, Head of Youth Offending Service

Contact details: 01325 406791

If you are concerned a child or adult may be at immediate risk you should contact the Police on 999 If a referral is then made to the Prevent team, and it is determined that there are concerns around radicalisation and violent extremism in relation to the referred individual, they can be supported through either Channel or Prevent Case Management processes.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies and documents within Academy. Further key safeguarding contacts can be found in [appendix 2.](#appendix2a)

Other related policies and guidance are:

|  |
| --- |
| Anti-Bullying Policy |
| Attendance Policy |
| Behaviour Policy, including Physical Interventions and Pupil Handling |
| Code of Conduct |
| Complaints Policy and Procedure |
| Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) |
| GDPR and Data Protection Policy |
| Health and Safety |
| Managing and Administering Medication in Schools |
| Mobile phone and portable device policy |
| Online Safety and E Safety, including Acceptable use policy |
| Protecting Children from Extremism and Radicalisation Policy |
| PSHE & RSE Policy |
| Safer Recruitment in Education Policy |
| Single Equality and Diversity Policy |
| Special Needs and SEND Policies |

Other related links and documents

|  |
| --- |
| [Allegations against Staff and Volunteers](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830121/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_060919.pdf) (KCSIE 2020) |
| [Child sexual Exploitation (CSE)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CSE_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf) and Child Criminal Exploitation (County lines and Traffiking) |
| [Children missing education](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf) |
| [Children Missing from home or care](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care__3_.pdf) and [Children with family members in prison](https://www.nicco.org.uk/) |
|  |
| [Domestic Violence](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help) and [Operation Encompass](http://www.operationencompass.org/) |
| [Fabricated or induced illness](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced) |
| [Faith Abuse](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief) |
| [Honour based abuse](https://safe.met.police.uk/crimes_of_honour/get_the_facts.html) including [Female Genital Mutilation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation) and [Forced Marriage](https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage) |
| [Mental health in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-mental-health-in-schools-and-colleges) |
| [Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence between Children](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719902/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf) ([Peer on Peer abuse](#PeeronPeer)) |
| [Private Fostering](https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/private-fostering/) |
| [Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)](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) |

**Introduction**

This is a whole Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection policy which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. Firthmoor Primary School is committed to the development of good practice and robust procedures to ensure our children’s welfare is of paramount importance. Early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and to ensure that Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

Our Academy fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard and protect children from any form of abuse, neglect or bullying. There are four main elements to our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

1. **Prevention** (positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models and the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and recognising and reducing risks to children including harassment, bullying, victimisation, sexual violence and sexual harassment, exploitation, radicalisation and issues such as Honour Based Abuse Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

* **Protection** (by following agreed procedures and policies, ensuring staff are supported to respond quickly, appropriately and sensitively to any safeguarding or child protection concerns and that every member of staff receives regular training and updates – at least annually)
* **Reconsideration** (following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child’s circumstances).
* **Support** (for pupils and school staff who may have been abused, vulnerable or are cause for concern).

**This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, and visitors to Firthmoor Primary School who have a responsibility to recognise abuse in its many forms.** Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone’s** responsibility**.**  Effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by operating a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. Every individual and agency work together in sharing information and taking prompt action to support the needs of our most vulnerable children.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education__3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf)

[What to do if you are worried a child being abused – Advice for Practitioners](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2)

[Departmental advice Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges)

**Academy Commitment**

We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult supports prevention. Our Academy will therefore:

* Ensure all staff, including supply staff and volunteers, are trained to carry out their safeguarding duties effectively through appropriate induction and regular training, including an identified Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with defined roles and responsibilities
* Ensure we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
* Develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting child protection issues
* Adhere to Academy policies, particularly the exclusion of mobile phones/personal devices/cameras during school hours (in particular Early Years Foundation Stage).
* Establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to and ensure that a child is fully supported during any cases or suspected cases of abuse.
* Ensure that pupils know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or experiencing difficulty about themselves or a friend.
* Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which help pupils develop the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, in particular recognising and reporting unsafe practices or abuse.
* Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

All staff have the added responsibility of recognising that there may be children with additional vulnerability who remain at higher risk of harm or abuse because of their existing vulnerability. Any child may benefit from early help, however Academy staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

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

(KCSIE 2020)

**Framework**

Schools do not operate in isolation. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families have a role to play. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice is the responsibility of the Academy and in conjunction with Darlington Safeguarding Children’s Board (DSCB: <http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/>) and its procedures, which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with children and families across the Borough. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020 contains information on what schools and colleges **should** do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges **must** comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children which applies to all the schools, including maintained nursery schools. The Children Act 1989 sets out the Legal Framework

**Multi Agency working**

Safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements are in place. These comprise of the local authority, a clinical commissioning group and the chief officer for police equally sharing responsibilities for working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children within each area. Safeguarding partners are expected to ensure schools are “fully engaged, involved and included in the new safeguarding arrangements” (DfE, 2020) and it is expected that they will name schools and colleges as relevant agencies and if named schools will have a statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements

**Inspection**

Ofsted’s inspections of early years, schools and post-16 provision will be carried out under: [Ofsted's Education Framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework). Inspectors will **always** report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective. In addition to the Framework and Inspections Handbooks, Ofsted publishes specific guidance to inspectors on inspecting safeguarding: [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-from-september-2015).

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

* *protecting ALL children under the age of 18 from maltreatment and abuse*; (including in addition to the four categories of harm (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect), issues such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), Honour based abuse (HBV) inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage.
* preventing radicalisation and extremism, harassment, bullying and victimization)
* 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.
* preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development

Academy staff will:

* Ensure that they are listened to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child.
* All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
* Ensure that they report **ANY** concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. (However, **ALL** staff can refer their concerns directly to The [Children’s Access Point](https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/private-fostering/) if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above). They should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible if they have reported concerns directly.
* Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies. All discussions decisions and reasons for them should be recorded on CPOMS adhering to the Academy’s recording and information sharing procedure.
* Ensure that they maintain an attitude of **‘it could happen here’** and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child /an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies.
* Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices of staff and potential failures in the school’s safeguarding regime through whistleblowing procedures and the staff code of conduct policy. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them such as contacting: The Academy Trustees, directly to Children’s Access Point (CAP) Hub on 01325 406222, the Police by dialing 101 or the NSPCC whistleblowing procedure. The NSPCC’s what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
* Ensure that they attend regular formal training and updates at least annually to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child.
* Understand and ensure that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out. Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on staff. If a member of staff, 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, they must report this to the police
* Ensure that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, the school has ‘Due regard’ To Prevent’ and to assess risk of children and young people being radicalized and drawn into extremism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols in place for all visitors so that views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others).
* Ensure that staff understand through online safety training the additional risks for pupils online and continue to promote the School’s Online Safety procedures and policy and Acceptable use Policy in the protection of all pupils.
* Ensure that they remain vigilant whilst visitors are on site and continue to promote the school’s commitment to keeping children safe through reminding visitors and parents of the school’s appropriate use of personal mobile phones/devices whilst they are on school premises.This includes staff understanding and adhering to the Staff Code of Conduct inclusive of use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the Academy is **Mrs Ann Dixon**.

The DSL has the overall responsibility for safeguarding and Child Protection and has the appropriate authority and training to undertake such a role including providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. The DSL attends strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and contributes to the assessment of children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns (KCSIE 2020).

It is the role of the senior designated lead to:

* Refer cases to the relevant agencies and support staff who make referrals and act as a point of contact for safeguarding partners and understand the assessment process for providing early help
* Ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the relevant authorities, including the Disclosure and Barring Service. [The NSPCC – when to call the police](https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf) should help DSL’s to understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.
* Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and support staff who make referrals to the LA Children’s Services team
* Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalization concern and support staff who make referrals
* refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
* refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
* Attend regular training and briefings to understand and keep up to date with any developments for the role and obtain access to resources
* Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, other agencies, organisations and practitioners and the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
* liaise with staff and other agencies on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral
* Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
* Ensure that all staff have access to and are familiar with policies and procedures regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection, including children missing in education, specifically new and part time staff
* Inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school’s permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.
* Is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with SEND and young carers
* Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEND face online and are confident they have the capacity to support SEND children to stay safe online
* is able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe and ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place for online content
* Keep accurate electronic or written records of referrals or concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
* Understand and support their school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
* Ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are communicated both regularly and publicly.
* Ensure that staff receive the relevant training and updates for their role, including annual refresher training and regular briefings and that all staff receive the policy and training on induction
* Ensure statutory checks on employee’s suitability to work with children is carried out and recorded.
* understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation

The Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Officer have been appropriately trained as a deputy DSL’s and, in the absence of the designated lead, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils.

Staff are kept informed about Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures, through inductions, briefings and awareness training. Safeguarding is a regular agenda item at whole staff meetings. The school code of conduct and KCSIE information is given at induction and records kept that staff have read and understood these documents

**Child Protection File**

Where children leave the school ensure their child protection file is transferred as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file. Ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt. Receiving schools should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs are aware as required. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

**Availability**

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. It is the responsibility of the DSL to decide arrangements for appropriate cover for any out of hours/out of term activities

**Governors’ responsibilities:**

It is the role and responsibility of the Governors to ensure that the Academy has an effective policy, that Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures are complied with, and to support the Academy in this aspect. It is important that Governors are not given details relating to specific child protection situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached

* Appoint a nominated governor who liaises with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to support and ensure the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding and child protection activity
* Understand and challenge Academy policies to create a culture where the welfare of students is paramount and staff feel confident to report any concerns
* Ensure that in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher, that these allegations are reported directly to the Chair of Governors and the Deputy Designated Officer (Deputy DSL).
* Ensuring that an effective Confidential reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) is in place and have clear procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff, including allegations made against the Headteacher and allegations against other children.
* Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and/or Relationships and Sex Education.
* Comply with their duties under current KCSIE legislation
* Ensure that at least one member of a recruitment panel has received up to date Safer Recruitment Training

**Procedures**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL) will be informed immediately by an employee of the school, pupil of the Academy, parent of the school or other persons, in the following circumstances:

* Suspicion that a child is being harmed
* There is evidence that a child is being harmed

Working together to safeguard children defines the categories of harm as:

**Abuse**

**Physical Abuse**

**Neglect**

**Sexual Abuse**

**Emotional Abuse**

Indications and Definitions of these types of abuse are detailed in **[Appendix 1](#Appendix1a)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to The Children’s Access Point if necessary. If a referral is made to CAP the DSL must complete a multi-agency [referral form](https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/)

The form should include all relevant information including:

* Children and family member details
* Significant others
* Other services involved
* Details of person making referral
* Consent
* Presenting Issue
* Reason for referral/request for services - outline concerns and why you believe this child is at risk of significant harm or in need of additional services (including impact on the child)
* What support is currently in place
* Named lead identified and ownership of the contact made

On receipt of a contact form to Children’s Social Care, the Children’s Access Point has 24 hours in which to make a decision about any actions to be taken in respect of the identified child. The DSL will be kept informed at all times.

**Allegations against staff or concerns regarding Safeguarding Practice**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague or Safeguarding practice within the Academy are undoubtedly placed in a difficult position. Staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount and staff should report concerns about a colleague, other adult or the Safeguarding practice within the school.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is important to have a culture of openness and transparency and a consultation with the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership’s Designated Officer **within one working day** if staff have;

* Behaved in a way which has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children

If staff have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

* this should be referred to the headteacher / DSL
* where there are concerns/allegations about the headteacher, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors.
* staff may also report their concerns directly to police, DSL or Deputy DSL if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children, including those who work in a voluntary capacity, are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way which provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Academy’s safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, staff can contact the [Darlington Safeguarding Board](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/children-safeguarding-board/professionals/safer-recruitment-and-managing-allegations/)

**Darlington Borough Council has appointed a Designated Officer who is:**

**Marion Garland**

**Telephone: 01325 406459** **Secure e-mail: DSP@darlington.gov.uk**

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled. NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285 or report it online at [help@nspcc.org,uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org,uk)

If and individual, including a volunteer, resigns or is removed from work involving children because of a safeguarding issue, the Academy must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring service

**Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. The Academy will communicate this to all parties.**

**[Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff –](#appendix3a)** [(See appendix 3)](#appendix3a)

**Responsibilities where a notifiable incident occurs**

Where a serious childcare incident occurs which meets the definition of a ‘notifiable incident’ the first step for the Academy is to take appropriate action to ensure the immediate safety of the child/ren or minimise the impact of any serious harm - [Child Protection Procedures](https://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/)

In all circumstances staff should consult with their Safeguarding Lead/Senior Manager and follow the Academy’s internal processes. A **notifiable incident** is an incident involving the care of a child which meets any of the following criteria:

* A child has died (including cases of suspected suicide), and abuse or neglect is known or suspected;
* A child has been “seriously harmed” and abuse or neglect is known or suspected
* A looked after child has died (including cases where abuse or neglect is not known or suspected); or
* A child in a regulated setting or service has died (including cases where abuse or neglect is not known or suspected)

“**Seriously harmed**” in the context of the above includes, but is not limited to, cases where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect, any or all of the following:

* A potentially life-threatening injury
* Serious and/or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development

This definition is not exhaustive. In addition, even if a child recovers, this does not mean that serious harm cannot have occurred. Darlington Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) will ensure that its considerations on whether serious harm has occurred are informed by seeking professional advice and support.

The Academy will ensure that all senior designated persons attend training relevant to their role in line with advice from the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership.

All staff will undertake awareness raising training under their induction into the Academy in Child Protection and Staff Code of Conduct and periodically to refresh and update their knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding and Child Protection. Annual refresher training is provided for all staff and regular updates and changes are discussed in staff meetings, briefings, emails, bulletins and an evidence record maintained to indicate when staff and governors have been trained

Support will be available for staff from the senior designated person in the first instance, and from other members of the school’s management team where there are concerns or queries about Safeguarding and Child Protection. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the deputies will receive appropriate training updated every **two** years. They will undertake prevent awareness raising and in addition to the formal training their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, via DSL network meetings and updates, but at least annually

All staff – including supply staff and volunteers – in the academy will read at least [part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912593/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_part_1_Sep_2020.pdf) and a record signed to indicate that this has been done

*From KCSIE 2020, Page 17*  **Actions where there are concerns about a child**

Referral not required. School/college takes relevant action, possibly including early help (2) and monitors locally

Referral (3) made if concerns escalate

Designated Safeguarding Lead or staff makes referral (3) to children’s social care (and call police if appropriate)

Within 1 working day, social worker makes decision about type of response required

Child in need of immediate protection: referrer informed

Section 47 (4) enquiries appropriate: referrer informed

Section 17 (4) enquiries appropriate: referrer informed

No formal assessment required: referrer informed

Appropriate emergency action taken by social worker, police or NSPCC (5)

Identify child at risk of significant harm ;( 4) possible child protection plan

Identify if child in need (4) and identify appropriate support

School/college considers early help assessment (2) accessing universal services and other support

Staff should do everything they can to support social workers.

At all stages, staff should keep the child’s circumstances under review (involving the DSL or deputy DSL as required) and re-refer if appropriate, to ensure the child’s circumstances improve – the child’s best interests must always come first

School/college action child

Other agency action

Staff have concerns about child and take immediate action. Staff follow their Child Protection Policy and speak to the

Designated Safeguarding Lead (1)

1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see part 4 of KCSIE 2020
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, and early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2) provides details guidance on the early help process.
3. Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
4. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare. Full details are in Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)
5. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

**Training and Support**

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**Professional Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue, which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Safeguarding and Child Protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the DSL and may require further investigations by appropriate authorities. Promising confidentiality would lead to a breakdown in trust of adults by the pupil and could potentially compromise their wellbeing and safety. The welfare of the child is the most important consideration.

The DSL will initiate a referral, where there is a cause for concern. Staff are informed of relevant aspects in respect of child protection on a ‘need to know basis’ only. Any information shared with a member of staff or other agencies in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

**Records, Monitoring and Information Sharing**

Accurate, well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our Academy is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

A record will be made of the concern raised and action taken. These records are kept electronically using CPOMS. Information and reports may be uploaded but photographic evidence will not be made. These records are kept confidentially and access to this system is only available to registered key holders. Records are kept of any pupil who is being monitored for child protection reasons. This will be monitored using the Early Help Assessment Framework. Any reports or information in paper format are stored in a locked, confidential filing system, which is separate to other files.

If a pupil transfers from the Academy their file will be forwarded to the pupil’s new school and staff follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines. Pupil details are maintained securely within our MIS System (SIMS) and includes all personal and contact details regarding a child, including the need requirement for more than one emergency contact number.

All staff will follow the Academy’s information sharing and recording polices to ensure recording keeping is processed fairly and securely and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018. Staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children’s social care

**The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children**

Further guidance can be found at: [Data Protection: Toolkit for Schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-toolkit-for-schools)

**Attendance at Safeguarding and Child Protection Conferences**

The DSL or other relevant staff (Deputy DSL, Class teacher) will aim to attend any conferences or meetings when called in respect of a pupil. A report should also be completed for conference. The report should indicate any concerns that the Academy may have; the pupil’s attendance; attainment and contact that might have been made with parents/ carers or professionals.

**Supporting Pupils at Risk**

Our Academy recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. The Academy may be the only secure, stable and predictable element in the lives of children at risk and that their behaviour may still be defiant and challenging. The Academy also recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be investigated and dealt with appropriately. No peer on peer abuse should be tolerated or minimised as part of growing up and all those involved will be provided with an appropriate level of support. The Academy will support pupils through:

* The curriculum to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation and self-protection which includes teaching children about safeguarding, online safety, recognising and managing risks. This can include topics covered as part of Relationships and Sex and Relationships Education (mandatory from 2020) as well as Fundamental British Values and the SMSC Curriculum which cover harm, abuse, positive and healthy relationships and crime.
* A curriculum which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain.
* The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
* A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting, including guidance for children on expected and appropriate behavior to one another.
* Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families and child’s voice through any form of communication is always heard.
* A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents/carers, whenever it is in the child’s interests to do so.
* The development and support of responsive and knowledgeable staff, trained to respond appropriately in safeguarding and child protection situations.

**Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable**

The Academy recognises that some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increased risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

* missing education/missing from education
* disabled or have special educational needs
* young carers
* Looked After Children / privately fostered children
* affected by abuse – physical / sexual / emotional / drugs
* affected by mental health issues including PICU, self-harm and eating disorders
* affected by domestic abuse
* neglected / living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
* at risk of fabricated or Induced Illness
* at risk of gang and youth violence.
* vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
* involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation (CSE), criminal child exploitation, grooming and trafficking
* vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying including cyber, homophobic, racist etc.
* live transient lifestyles
* LGBT (lesbian gay bisexual transgender)
* vulnerable to extremism, radicalisation or faith abuse.
* asylum seekers
* do not have English as a first language
* at risk of ‘honour based abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and faith abuse

Further guidance and information of following can be found in [appendix 1 and the links below](#Appendix1a)

* [**Children Missing from Education**](#ChildMissingEducation)
* [**‘Honour Based’ abuse**](#Honourbasedviolence)
* [**Female Genital Mutilation**](#FGM)
* [**Forced Marriage**](#ForcedMarriage)
* **[Breast Ironing](#BreastIroning)**
* [**Child Sexual Exploitation**](#CSE) **and** [**Criminal Child Exploitation (County Lines)**](#Countylines)
* **[Peer on Peer abuse (including upskirting)](#PeeronPeer)**
* **[Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)](#PeeronPeer)**
* [**Extremism and Radicalisation**](#Extremism)
* **[Prevent Duty and Channel](#Prevent)**

**Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems can face additional safeguarding challenges. The Academy recognises that additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect in this group of children.

These can include:

* Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration;
* The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
* Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Concerns such as changes in behaviour and presentation (both physical and mental) must be considered for each individual child and their own circumstances and must not be dismissed. Children with SEN are often more prone to peer group isolation than other children and there is greater potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. Time must be taken to ensure that the full circumstances of any child who has additional needs and requires support around language and communication is shared at the point of referral to ensure the best possible outcome for the child is always achieved**.**

**Looked after children and previously looked after children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances. These experiences can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behavior and mental health. Our Academy will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child’s looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and the child’s contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

The Academy will maintain information about the child’s care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer. The designated safeguarding lead or deputy DSL will have details of the child’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child and will use this information support the best interests of the child’s safety, wellbeing and educational outcomes.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

**Early Help and use of the Early Help Assessment Plan**

The Academy believes that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. We operate a child centered and coordinated approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life. Where a child/family require extra support, the Academy, organisations, agencies and practitioners collaborate effectively using the early help assessment process to identify what help the child and family require to support them.

The Academy will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for any child who:

* is disabled and has specific additional needs
* has special educational needs
* is a young carer
* is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behavior
* is in a family where circumstances present challenges for the child, such as adult substance abuse, adult mental ill health, domestic abuse
* is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
* is particularly vulnerable in any of the ways identified above
* school refusal and attendance

The Inclusion Officer (who is also a deputy DSL) is responsible for providing early help. An Early Help Assessment will only be undertaken with the agreement of the child’s parents/carers. If the family consent is not received and concerns remain, the Academy may make a referral to Children’s Access Point.

**Promoting positive mental health**

Overall, it is estimated that one in ten children and young people have a diagnosable mental disorder – the equivalent of three pupils in every classroom across the country. The Academy’s procedures and strategies are a part of a wider systems approach to promoting positive mental wellbeing and preventing mental illness in children and young people.

The school uses various strategies to support pupils who are experiencing high levels of psychological stress or who are at risk of developing mental health problems. All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Additional support may come from within the school or require the involvement of specialist staff or support services. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Strategies and interventions to promote and support mental health include:

* PSHE Education throughout the curriculum
* Positive classroom management and small group work
* Counselling
* Speech and language therapy
* Child psychologist
* Working with parents/carers
* Peer mentoring
* Working with CAMHS

Abuse, neglect and other traumatic adverse childhood experiences, can have a lasting impact and it’s key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have any mental health concerns about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by following the Academy child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.

Further advice and guidance can be accessed using the following links:

[Supporting mental health in Schools and Colleges](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-mental-health-in-schools-and-colleges)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schoolshttps:/www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2)

[Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing)

**Safe School, Safe Staff**

Pupils are taught to understand relationships, promote British values and respond to and calculate risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) education lessons and in all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help pupils think about risks they may encounter and manage them and where to find help and support. Discussions about relationships and risk are empowering and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Pupils are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Pupils are also reminded regularly about online safety and tackling bullying procedures including the legalities and consequences.

**Online and digital Safety**

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

* **content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
* **contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
* **conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

The Academy ensures that Online Safety is embedded within all areas of the curriculum, supporting and encouraging children to stay safe online. The Academy ensures that there is appropriate filtering ([Netsweeper Education](https://www.netsweeper.com/education/)) and monitoring systems in place that restricts access to inappropriate and harmful material without ‘over blocking’ or unreasonable restrictions. G Suite for Education is used to support home learning and staff, pupils and volunteers are expected to adhere to the Academy’s Acceptable Use Policy. Further guidance can be found at: [Teaching online safety in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools)

Education at home

There are occasions where the children are being asked to learn online at home. The Academy Online Safety within the curriculum includes how to stay safe when online at home. Online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach. Further guidance and support can be found at: [Safeguarding and Remote Education](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

**Safer Recruitment**

All staff, including governors, are required to complete an enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) check prior to taking up appointment. For staff and volunteers **not engaging in regulated activity** the Academy conducts a risk assessment and the uses their professional judgment when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate. The Academy is not legally permitted to request barred list information on a supervised volunteer not engaging in regulated activity, however governors are subject to a section 128 check because a person subject to one is disqualified from being a governor. For all **regulated activity** the Academy obtains an enhanced DBS Certificate with barred list for all volunteers engaging in regulated activity

Relevant recruitment and vetting checks, including seeking references where necessary, are carried out for all staff and includes volunteers engaging in regular activity. A **single central record** which demonstrates the pre-employment vetting checks for all staff, is maintained and stored securely in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018

The Academy ensures that at least one member of a recruitment panel has received Safer Recruitment Training. Staff working in a one-to-one situation with a pupil should ensure that they are positioned so as to be visible and audible to other staff where there may be a possibility of misinterpretation of their interaction with a pupil. All staff should ensure the privacy and dignity of all pupils, especially during the routines of personal care of our pupils.

**Disqualification under the Childcare Act**

The 2018 regulations are made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006 (“the 2006 act”). They set out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified for the purposes of section 75 of the act. Section 76(2) of the 2006 act, provides that a person who is disqualified under the 2018 regulations may not:

* provide relevant childcare provision
* be directly concerned in the management of such provision

Under section 76(3) schools are prohibited from employing a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision in the settings if they are found to have committed an offence which is included in the 2018 regulations, unless the individual in question has been granted a waiver by Ofsted for the role they wish to undertake. An employer commits an offence if they contravene section 76(3), except if they prove that they did not know, and had no reasonable grounds for believing, that the person they employed was disqualified. Further guidance and support is available at [Department for Education – Disqualification under the childcare Act 2006](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006#relevant-offences)

**Host Families – Homestay during exchange visits**

If the Academy is arranging for children to take part in an exchange visit, it will assess the suitability of the adults in those families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay. In addition to the risk assessments carried out, the Academy will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information for all adults providing the UK homestay.

Further information and guidance can be found at: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

Governors have agreed and ratified Academy policies, procedures, processes or systems which must be read and considered in conjunction with this policy, which include:

* Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing)
* Complaints Policy and Procedure
* Safer Recruitment Policy
* Code of Conduct (for both staff and governors)
* Behaviour / SEND / Attendance Policy

**Abuse of Position of Trust - Sexual Offences Act**

Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident.

In addition, staff should understand that it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent. ([Sexual Offences Act](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/act/15/enacted/en/html))

**Communication with children - including the use of technology**

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

Communication with children both in the ‘real’ world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, online gaming and games consoles, tablets, phones, messaging services (texts, emails etc), social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand held devices. (Given the ever changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)

This means adults should:

* not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work
* not give out their personal details
* use only equipment and Internet services provided by the Academy
* adhere to the Academy’s Acceptable Use policy to ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute

**Visitors/ Site security**

Visitors to the Academy are asked to sign the visitors’ book, if necessary show ID, and are given a visitors badge to confirm they have permission to be on site. All visitors are expected to observe the Academy’s safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The Headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

* All visitors are expected to adhere to the schools’ policy on use of photographs and images.
* All visitors to the school are requested to keep their mobile phones / mobile devices on silent. Bluetooth or similar functions should also be switched off at all times
* Visitors may only use personal device on the school premises with the permission of the headteacher

**Complaints Procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school’s complaints, disciplinary and grievance procedures.

**Worried About an Adult?**

You may want to tell someone that something is happening to you or you may be concerned about someone, whether you are a relative, a neighbour or a member of the public. Someone may tell you something that has happened to him or her or you may see or hear something happening, that makes you feel uneasy or uncomfortable. The priority is to keep people safe from harm. It can be difficult to identify the seriousness of a concern when the abuse is first recognised but where there is any concern at all, this should be reported. There are several ways you can report abuse. These include:

* Completing the [Safeguarding Adults Concern Form](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/adults-safeguarding-board/worried-about-an-adult/) and emailing to: [ssact@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:ssact@darlington.gov.uk).
* Contact the First Point of Contact Team (Adult Social Care at Darlington Borough Council). You can explain that you wish to report a suspected case of adult abuse.

**Telephone - 01325 406111 / Minicom - 01325 468504**

**Text - 07538 601527**

If you require help urgently outside office hours, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team from 5pm on Friday to 9am on Monday and also on Bank holidays.

**Telephone - 01642 524552 / Minicom: 01642 602346**.

All reports are treated seriously. Adult Social Care has a legal duty to make enquiries into the alleged abuse or neglect of adults at risk. For any safeguarding concern, it is important that the views and wishes of the adult being abused are considered, it is also important, if someone is in danger, that we ensure they are safe. It is important to talk about the concern and find out the best way to keep the person at risk or others safe.

**Monitoring and review**

This policy statement will be reviewed annually as part of the overall Safeguarding and Child Protection policy review

[**Appendix 1**](#Appendix1)

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures - Taking Action**

School staff have a vital role to play and must take all allegations seriously. Management and prevention of abuse should be introduced to children through the curriculum. All children should begin to develop skills and practices which will help to keep them safe. Issues concerning family life, sex and safety should be addressed in an appropriate way through topic work and children’s questions. Issues can be integrated through PSHE and RSE.

The categories / definitions of child abuse are:

* Physical abuse
* Neglect and failure to thrive
* Emotional and psychological abuse and emotional deprivation
* Child sexual abuse

Children at risk

There are four ways that you may become suspicious or concerned that a child is being harmed, or alerted to the possibility that they are ‘at risk’.

* By your own observations of signs and symptoms.
* Allegations or reports from another person.
* An allegation or ‘cry for help’ from a child.
* An admission or ‘cry for help’ from someone who says they are harming a child.

Any allegations made by a child must be taken seriously and reported

Alerting Factors

Some of the signs and symptoms of abuse staff should be aware of could be:

* Bruising
* Bites
* Cuts and abrasions
* Scalds and Burns
* Cold Injuries – swollen feet and hands
* Fractures and breaks
* Head injuries and haemorrhages / black eyes
* unexplained injuries or trauma
* Unusual Marks on the body – Strap / Finger / Rope
* Oral Injuries
* Genital injuries and STI’s
* Frequent unexplained illness
* Fabricated or induced Illness / Poisoning
* Unusual pattern or unexplained, frequent attendance at medical service
* Near drowning
* Inappropriately explained poor school attendance
* Neglect
* Malnutrition
* Extreme distress / unexplained or unusual behaviour / become withdrawn
* Low self esteem / Aggressive behaviour / over friendliness or eagerness
* Unusual eating behaviours
* Wetting and soiling
* Sexualised Behaviour
* Running away from home / school
* Unusual parent/carer and child interactions

*For further guidance see:* [*NICE: Child abuse and Neglect*](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng76/chapter/recommendations)

It is the responsibility of staff to report and record their concerns as soon as possible. We actively encourage staff to report any concerns about a child and promote discussion with DSL if in any doubt. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of **“it could happen here”.**

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

* The senior designated lead is Mrs Dixon, Headteacher. Information must be given to designated lead or the Deputy DSL and not discussed with anyone else. **REPORT** any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible
* In an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
* **RECORD** any concerns, conversations, actions or events.
* Do not start your own investigation but gain relevant information
* Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue unnecessarily with colleagues.
* Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must, and have a duty to, pass the information on. Staff are to be mindful of the point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupils it is best practice for staff to:

* allow pupils to speak freely
* remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
* not be afraid of silences, and allow space and time for pupil to continue, staff will recognise the barriers the pupil may have had to overcome to disclose.
* clarifying or repeating back to check what they have heard if needed but will not lead the discussion in any way and will not ask direct or leading questions – such as; whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother thinks about it.
* use questions such as; Tell me…. explain…..describe? Is there anything else?
* at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
* tell the pupil what will happen next.

The pupil may agree to go with you to see the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Otherwise let them know that you will be consulting them.

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will be in the most informed position to make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from Children’s Access Point.

Records and Monitoring

Any concerns about a child must be recorded ASAP. The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Staff are aware of their responsibilities under this legislation so that, when considering sharing confidential information, those principles apply. Only authorised staff have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families which is kept confidential at all times. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

All records will provide a factual and evidence based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions. Records will be signed, dated and, where appropriate, witnessed. An accurate record should be kept of injuries / marks on a child by drawing a figure and indicating type, position, colour and size of injuries / marks. It may be appropriate for the DSL to open a secure safeguarding file, this will help in building patterns and decision making. We will feedback to the staff member any actions, however this will be on a need to know basis. It may not be appropriate for staff members to know every detail of the child’s life.

* An accurate record can be kept of marks on a child by drawing a figure and indicating type, position, colour and size of marks.
* Staff should report any concerns to the DSL which will be formally recorded.
* If a child tells of abuse, staff must record exactly what the child said in the child’s own words. It is vital that the precise words are recorded.
* If a child comes to tell staff about abuse and the child says “don’t tell anyone” staff must respond by explaining that the child can still talk to them, but that they are not allowed to keep anything secret from the DSL. Do not ask leading questions. It is not the responsibility of the school to investigate suspected abuse. LISTEN – REPORT - RECORD INFORMATION
* If the DSL is unsure about whether a case should be referred or has a general concern about a child’s health and development, advice can be sought from Darlington Children’s Access Point.
* Information volunteered by parents/carers/guardians should be formally recorded.
* Precise details of any referral should be recorded.
* A separate and secure filing system is in place for confidential records.

If it is felt that a child is in immediate danger or a child is likely to suffer significant harm, the designated safeguarding lead or deputy must:

* Inform the Designated Officer in Children’s Services
* All information passed to Darlington Children’s Services/other agencies must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible.

All staff need to be clear about guidelines for restraining/touching children. Staff can only ‘handle’ (use reasonable force to restrain) children if:

* The member of staff is in danger of being assaulted by the child.
* The child is a danger to another child.
* The child is restrained to prevent an accident to another child.
* To prevent the child from hurting themselves.
* The child is causing significant damage to property.

Reasonable force depends upon:

* Size and age of child / Build of the teacher.
* Sex/strength of teacher.

Staff need to refer to the Academy’s Behaviour Policy, including Physical Interventions and Handling

The safeguarding file

The establishment of a safeguarding file is an important principle in terms of storing and collating information about children which relates to either a safeguarding concern, or an accumulation of welfare concerns. This file will be kept separately from the main pupil file and is only accessed by appropriately trained staff. The school will keep written and electronic (CPOMS) records of concerns about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to external agencies immediately.

* Each child will have an individual file i.e. no family files.
* All incidents/episodes will be recorded e.g. phone calls to other agencies. This will help build a picture and help the DSL in analysis and action, which may include no further action, monitoring, any Early Help intervention, whether a CAF should be undertaken, or whether a referral should be made to other agencies.
* In cases where there is multi agency involvement - meetings and plans, actions and responsibilities shall be clarified and outcomes recorded.
* Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the DSL to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements.
* If the child moves to another school, the file will be securely sent or taken, to the DSL at the new establishment/school and a written receipt will be obtained.
* There will be a timely liaison between each school’s DSL to ensure a smooth and safe transition for the child.
* The school will retain a copy to evidence actions, in accordance with record retention guidance.

Referral to Children’s Access Point

The DSL will either contact Children’s Access Point for advice and guidance or complete a referral if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm or meet the child in need criteria. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child. If the situation does not appear to be improving the school will press for reconsideration, if necessary. Any member of staff can refer to other agencies in exceptional circumstances i.e. in an emergency or when there is a genuine concern that action has not been taken.

**Definitions of abuse and neglect** ([Working Together to Safeguard Children)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

**Safeguarding**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:-

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* And taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

**Child Protection**

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Child:**  is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

**What is 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. **Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.**

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

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

**Sexual abuse**: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (peer on peer abuse, paragraph 27 KCSIE 2020)

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Grooming** is when someone builds a relationship with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know – for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomer may be female or male. They can be any age. Many children and young people don’t understand that they have been groomed; or that what has happened is abuse.

**Serious violence:** All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that 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.

The main areas that the Serious Violence Strategy focuses on are:

* Tackling county lines
* Early intervention and prevention
* Supporting communities and local partnerships
* Effective law enforcement and criminal justice response

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office’s [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines) guidance

**Position of Trust**

The age of consent for sexual activity is 18 years old if you are in a position of trust over that child.

**Specific safeguarding issues**

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via **peer on peer abuse**. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

* **bullying** (including cyberbullying);
* **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**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, flicking bra straps, lifting up skirts, grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
* **upskirting**, typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence and anyone of any gender can be a victim
* **sexting** (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
* **initiation/hazing** type violence and rituals.

All staff should be clear as to Academy’s policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be

associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children

outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead

(and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in

situations outside their families. This is known as **contextual safeguarding**, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child’s life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Additional information regarding contextual safeguarding is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding). **Annex A of the KCSIE 2020** contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

**[Child Missing in Education](#Guidancelist)**

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

The school makes enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child, jointly with the local authority, before deleting pupils name from the register.

A child going missing from education, which includes within the school day, is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and forced marriage. Unauthorised absences will be monitored and followed up in line with procedures, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions. All pupils are placed on admission and attendance registers as required by law and the Local Authority is informed of any child removed from our admission register via the local authority secure email system.

The Academy will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend for a continuous period of 10 days or more in line with Darlington procedures.

We notify the local authority when we are about to remove a pupil’s name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the statutory guidance for Children Missing in Education.

[Statutory Guidance on Children Missing Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education)

[Darlington Borough Council – Guidance on Children Missing from Home or Care](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/media/1312/children-missing-from-home-or-care-procedures-november-2016-v22-final.pdf)

This duty does not apply when a pupil’s name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

When removing a pupil’s name, notification to the local authority includes: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil’s future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the grounds under which the pupil’s name is to be removed from the admission register

We ensure that we will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil’s name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii) (see Annex A).

We notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil’s name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil’s name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made. When adding a pupil’s name, the notification to the local authority must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

**Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [NICCO](https://www.nicco.org.uk/) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

**[Honour based’ abuse (HBV)](#Guidancelist)**

Encompasses crimes and abuse which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. It is often linked to family members, acquaintances or the family community who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, staff should contact Darlington Children’s Access Point Team on 01325 406222 or email [childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk)

**[Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)](#Guidancelist)**

Female Genital Mutilation (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. School staff, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. The school will report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a **legal duty upon teachers to report** to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the Academy’s designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf).

**[Forced Marriage](#Guidancelist)**

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

Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322310/HMG_Statutory_Guidance_publication_180614_Final.pdf) and [Multi-agency guidelines](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf), with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. Staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk

**[Breast Ironing](#Guidancelist)**

Breast ironing also known as ‘Breast Flattening’ is the process whereby young pubescent girls breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education.

Much like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Breast Ironing is a harmful cultural practice and is child abuse. Professionals working with children and young people must be able to identify the signs and symptoms of girls who are at risk of or have undergone breast ironing. Similarly to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), breast ironing is classified as physical abuse.

[**Child Sexual Exploitation**](#Guidancelist) **(CSE)** **and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

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

perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online

Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation:

* can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
* can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
* can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
* can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
* can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
* may occur without the child or young person’s immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
* can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
* is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation and Child criminal exploitation:

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

[Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CSE_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf)

[**Criminal Child Exploitation (County Lines)**](#Guidancelist)

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the [National Referral Mechanism](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism) should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

* can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
* can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
* can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
* can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
* can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
* is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Staff should report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead, in particular if the child has repeated unexplained absence or displays signs of unusual behavior.

**[Peer on Peer Abuse & Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)](#Guidancelist)**

**Allegations of abuse made against other children**

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways, this can include, (but is not limited to), bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; upskirting; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

It is clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

* making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
* not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
* challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them
* upskirting – which is a criminal offence - typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

All victims of peer on peer abuse or bulling are supported and staff are required to follow the reporting procedures within this policy. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the 85 experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as ‘sexting’ or ‘sending nudes’, there is no clear definition of ‘sexting’ - this advice only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

‘Youth produced sexual imagery’ best describes the practice because:

* ‘Youth produced’ includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves.
* ‘Sexual’ is clearer than ‘indecent.’ A judgement of whether something is ‘decent’ is both a value judgement and dependent on context.
* ‘Imagery’ covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the document).

\*Extract from UK Council for Child Internet Safety. Guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

Staff should be aware that the initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the Academy’s referral process and, as is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

For further help and guidance see:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education__3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf)

[Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool](https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/category/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool)

[ChildNet](https://www.childnet.com/)

**Online sexual harassment**

ChildNet has published new educational resources to tackle online sexual harassment by young people. The ‘Step up, speak up!’ resources include: four lesson plans covering ground rules, understanding, responding and reporting peer-based online sexual harassment; a teacher toolkit; films; a poster; an assembly presentation and a peer-led workshop plan.

**Source:** [ChildNet](http://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/1nMUNv9GNG7HIp8IRNa4cHrTS" \t "_blank)  **Date:** 14 March 2019

**Further information:** [Step up, speak up!](http://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/1nMURuv2eptcGnSUJmypVG3Zt)

**Read more on NSPCC Learning:** [Keeping children safe online: online course](http://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/1nMUVtQnF8OHEmD6AVWLEEG54)

**Online safety resources**

The National Crime Agency (NCA) has launched new resources aimed at helping 4- to 7-year-olds stay safe online. Jessie & Friends involves three animated videos, each aimed at a different age group, covering: watching videos, sharing pictures and playing games. Accompanying resources include: lesson plans, information for parents and carers and storybooks.

**Source:** [NCA](http://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/1nMVfqz6ONycugm3UMUwhxKx3)  **Date:** 13 March 2019

**Further information:** [Jessie & friends: online safety education for 4-7s](http://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/1nMVjpUsfwTHsf6fMmiS0wmCE)

**Read more on NSPCC Learning:** [Keeping children safe online: online course](http://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/1nMVnpfNGgfcqdQrDVHdJuYIf)

**[Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation](#Guidancelist)**

This is part of our wider safeguarding duty. The Academy will intervene where possible to prevent vulnerable children being radicalised. Varying forms of communication and access to the internet has become a major factor in radicalisation and the recruitment of group members. As with all other forms of abuse, staff should be confident in identifying pupils at risk and act proportionately and should report any concerns to the DSL.

The Academy works with other partners and agencies, including the Channel Panel, to intervene and support pupils at risk of radicalisation. The DSL receives regular and up to date training to support staff and pupils with concerns. The Academy ensures safe internet filters are in place and ensure our pupils are educated in online behavior and safety.

**Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Extremism** is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child’s vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children’s behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel programme.

**[The Prevent duty](#Guidancelist)**

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

All staff, including governors, receive Prevent training, at least annually, and the DSL and senior leadership team attend briefings, updates meetings on a regular basis to familarise with the revised Prevent duty guidance. Staff can find further help and guidance below:

**[Prevent Duty Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance)**

[Educate Against Hate,](https://educateagainsthate.com/) a website launched by the Her Majesty’s Government has been developed to support and equip schools, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

**Channel**

Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. An individual’s engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance).

**Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (\*Close family relative is defined as a ‘grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt’ and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)

**Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances. DSL’s (and any deputies) focus on early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible and ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances.

For more information, please access this link: [**Darlington Borough Council – Homelessness Support**](https://www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/finding-a-home/homelessness/)

[**Appendix 2**](#appendix2)  **Key Safeguarding Contacts**

**Darlington Borough Council Safeguarding Board**

Children’s Access Point (CAP)

Telephone: 01325 406222

E-mail: [childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk)

Website: http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/

The Children’s Access Point is open during the following hours:

Monday - Thursday: 8:30am - 5pm

Friday: 8:30am - 4:30pm

If you need to get in touch out of office hours, contact the Emergency Duty team by telephone: 01642 524552

The Safeguarding Boards' Business Unit staff are based at Town Hall, Feethams, Darlington, DL1 5QT

Amanda Hugill - Business Manager

Marian Garland - Development Officer and Designated Officer (LADO), Darlington Borough Council (01325 406459). Secure email: DSP@darlington.gov.uk

Hannah Fay - Business Support Officer

**Telephone: 01325 406452**

Joanna Conway – Safeguarding Education Officer 01325 405848

Alex Bloundele – CSE project Worker 01325 406160

Kendra Horner – Missing from home coordinator 01325 406176

**Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

You can call the Children First Response Team between 8:30am-5pm Monday to Thursday, and 8:30am-4:30pm on Fridays. Website: [Darlington Borough Council - MASH](https://www.darlington.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-first-response-team/)

**Children and young people:** 01325 742020 / [**ccdref@darlington.gov.uk**](mailto:ccdref@darlington.gov.uk)

**Adults:** 01325 406111 / [**ssact@darlington.gov.uk**](mailto:ssact@darlington.gov.uk)

Outside of these hours, please call The Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524552 or Minicom 01642 602346 **In an emergency always call 999.**

**Police: Non-emergency dial 101**

**Children’s Fist Response Team (Police Station) 01325 742020**

**Early Help**

**Darlington Borough Council:** https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/early-help-assessment/

Kirstie Sutherland – Team Manager (5-19) 01325 406023

Deborah Archer – Team Manager (5-19) 01325 406245

McNay Street Children’s Centre, 2a McNay Street, Darlington, DL3 6SW

**Health**

School Nurse: Irene Machin 03000 030 013

CAMHS: The Mulberry Centre 01325 736350

Rowen Building, Darlington Memorial Hospital, Darlington, DL3 6HX

Guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/>

**Virtual Head for Looked after Children (LAC)**

Calvin Kiplin 01325 406272

**Darlington Borough Council – Looked after Children information:** <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/looked-after-children/>

Looked after through care team contact details

**Pease House**, 12A Horsemarket, Darlington DL1 5PW  
Laura Bissell - Interim Team Manager for Leaving Care - 01325 406281  
Toni Lawton - Interim Team Manager for Looked After - 01325 406792  
Should you wish to discuss a Looked After Child/Young Person and you are unable to contact their allocated worker you should contact the Duty worker on the following telephone number: 01325 406284

**Police Contacts and Information**

**Prevent Team** (office hours) 0191 375 2234

Non-urgent enquiries 101, Emergency calls 999

**To report illegal information, pictures or videos** found on the internet [www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism). Anti-terrorist hotline: **0800 789 321**

**Due Diligence and Counter Extremism Group** (DDCEG) **Helpline - 020 7340 7264**. For education staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly and in confidence or if you are concerned about extremism in school or an organisation that works with children, or if you think a child might be at risk of extremism.

CHANNEL Panel Chair

Jo Benson, Head of Youth Offending Service

Contact details: 01325 406791

**Further Guidance and SupportWhat to do if you’re worried a child is being abused**

[Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2)

[Darlington Borough Council: Children first response team](https://www.darlington.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-first-response-team/).

**Links to specific safeguarding issues -** [**http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/children-safeguarding-board/children-and-young-people/**](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/children-safeguarding-board/children-and-young-people/)

Child missing from education (CME)

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf>

Child missing from home or care

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271820/Flowchart_when_a_child_goes_missing_from_care.pdf>

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CSE_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf>

Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578979/GD8_-_Sexting_Guidance.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>

Upskirting

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

Bullying including cyberbullying

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Domestic violence and abuse

<https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

Operation Encompass

<http://www.operationencompass.org/>

<https://www.northumbria.police.uk/media/6832788/operation-encompass-booklet.pdf>

Drugs and Alcohol – Advice for Schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/addiction-and-dependency/#.W8RWp1RKi71>

Fabricated or induced illness

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced>

<https://www.safeguardinginschools.co.uk/fabricated-or-induced-illness/>

Faith abuse

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuselinked-to-faith-or-belief)

[linked-to-faith-or-belief](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuselinked-to-faith-or-belief)

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation-fgm-guidance-for-healthcare-staff>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Forced marriage

<https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

Breast Ironing

<https://www.safeguardinginschools.co.uk/breast-ironing/>

Honour based abuse

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/honour-based-violence-and-forced-marriage-guidance-identifying-and-flagging-cases>

<http://www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk/1-what-is-domestic-violence-/17-honour-based-violence.html>

Gender-based violence

<https://www.gov.uk/crime-justice-and-law/violence-against-women-and-girls>

Criminal Child Exploitation (County Lines)

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

Human Trafficking

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/victims-of-trafficking-guidance-for-competent-bodies>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance>

Extremism and Radicalisation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

Prevent Duty and Channel Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Gangs and youth violence

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

Mental health

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Homelessness

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/finding-a-home/homelessness/>

Private Fostering

<https://www.safeguardinginschools.co.uk/private-fostering/>

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childrens-social-care/private-fostering/>

*[Appendix 3](#appendix3b)*

**Statement of Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff**

**This statement applies to all pupils, staff, (including supply staff) governors, and visitors to Firthmoor Primary School who have a responsibility to recognise abuse in its many forms.**

Firthmoor Primary School takes its responsibility of care for its pupils seriously. Effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by operating a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. Every individual and agency work together in sharing information and taking prompt action to support the needs of our most vulnerable children.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. Any investigation of an allegation of abuse against a member of staff must follow the professional standards and procedures described here.

It is important that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be poor or unsafe practice by colleagues and that concerns expressed by children, parents and others are listened to and taken seriously. When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is important to have a culture of openness and transparency and a consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Officer **within one working day** if staff have;

* Behaved in a way which has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or;
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children.
* behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

Firthmoor Primary School will always comply with Darlington Borough Council Safeguarding Partnership Procedures. [Darlington Safeguarding Partnership - Managing Allegations](https://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/professionals/managing-allegations/).

**If you have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague’s career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount and concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child’s welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported.

Any allegation or concerns must must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead in the absence of the DSL. You must:

* Make a signed and dated written record of your concerns, observations or the information you have received and give it to the DSL/Headteacher straight away.
* Maintain strict confidentiality

Should the allegation be made against the Headteacher, than this should be immediately reported to the Chair of Governors.

**Roles and Responsibilities for the current Academic Year:**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Mrs Ann Dixon – Headteacher

**Deputy Safeguarding Leads** Mrs Victoria Morrow – Deputy Headteacher

Mrs Dawn Kilpatrick – Inclusion officer

**Designated Safeguarding Governor** Mrs Pat Irving

**Chair of Governors** Mr Bill Paton

**Initial actions following an allegation**

The person who has received an allegation, or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead who will discuss the matter with the Darlington Safeguarding Partnerships designated officer and provide any further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation at this stage.

The discussion will also consider whether there is evidence or information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded. All allegations will be taken very seriously.

Following this discussion, if it is believed that the allegation will be referred on, then this would be done with immediate effect. The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children.

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

* Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
* Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
* Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
* Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
* Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school

If the allegation has cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the local authority designated officer will immediately refer to children’s social care team and request a strategy meeting in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children. In those circumstances the strategy meeting should include the local authority designated officer, the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and key safeguarding personnel. If there is not cause to suspect that “significant harm” is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the local authority designated officer should immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed.

Where the Academy is not the employer of the supply staff, Agencies should be fully involved and cooperate in any enquires from the LADO, police or the local authority children’s services. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation and agencies are required to follow the guidance of their internal procedures to support their staff member.

**Action following initial consideration**

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence it will be for the Headteacher to deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headteacher should institute appropriate action within three working days.

If a formal disciplinary hearing is required, then the Academy disciplinary procedures will be followed and a hearing should be held within 15 working days.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action the investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the employer within 10 working days. Following receipt of this report, a disciplinary hearing should then be held within 15 days.

In cases in which children’s social care team has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors should take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action. The local authority designated officer should continue to liaise with the school to monitor progress of the case and provide advice or support when required or requested.

If and individual, including a volunteer, resigns or is removed from work involving children because of a safeguarding issue, the Academy must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring service

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Academy’s safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, staff can contact the [Darlington Safeguarding Board](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk/)

**Darlington Borough Council has appointed a Designated Officer who is:**

**Marion Garland**

**Telephone: 01325 406451** **Secure e-mail:** [**DSP@darlington.gov.uk**](mailto:DSP@darlington.gov.uk)

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285, line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday or report it online at [help@nspcc.org,uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org,uk).

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 or contact the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

**Confidentiality**

The Academy will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The DSL will take advice from the local authority’s designated officer, police and children’s social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

* Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
* How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
* What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
* How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. The Academy will communicate this to all parties.

**Record-keeping**

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual’s confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

* A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
* Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
* Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual’s confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual. Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual’s personnel file.

**References**

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

**Learning lessons**

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority’s designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school’s procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

* Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
* The duration of the suspension
* Whether or not the suspension was justified
* The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual