

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedure

Approved by RET CEO for RET Board

Approved on Sept 20

SLT contact Headteacher

Revision due Annually



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This procedure should be read in conjunction with:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Appendix 1 – Types and Signs of Abuse
- Appendix 2 – The Role of the DSL
- Appendix 3 – Specific Safeguarding Issues and Terminology

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mia Lowney

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are Ben Walker, Sarah Price, Helena Staples, Amanda Gamon

The named Governor for Safeguarding is Katherine Laux

The named person for Looked After Children is Mia Lowney

The named person for Female Genital Mutilation is Mia Lowney

The named person for Child Sexual Exploitation is Mia Lowney

If you suspect that a child is at imminent risk of danger, please call 999 without delay.

## 1. Staff Training

- a. All school staff must receive an annual Child Protection and Safeguarding update.
- b. All school staff must sign to say they have read Section 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the RET Child Protection Policy and Procedure.
- c. Staff may complete online Safeguarding training whilst waiting to attend face to face training (which is school and Local Authority Specific).
- d. The school must keep records of who has attended an annual update and when and who has signed to say they have read and understood the appropriate documents.
- d. Staff who are Level 2 Lead trained should renew their Level 2 training every 2 years.
- e. Level 2 training does not automatically make a staff member a DSL or DDSL. The latter must be appointed and named by the school.
- f. The school must appoint a Lead Staff Member for Looked After Children, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Sexual Exploitation. This may be one staff member or three. Whoever is appointed to these roles must be appropriately trained and updated in these areas.
- g. Any staff member who have Safeguarding as part or all of their role must read appropriate DFE guidance documents IN FULL e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children, Sexual Violence and Harassment in Schools, Criminal Exploitation; County Lines, Teaching Online Safety in Schools, Channel Guidance, What to do if you think a child is being abused; advice for practitioners. It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that this is enforced.

## 2. Recognising Potential Abuse/Safeguarding Issues

Please see Appendix 1 and Appendix 3 to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for specific types and signs of abuse.

## 3. Staff Child Protection/Safeguarding Concerns

### a. Communicating with the DSL

All staff will refer concerns to the DSL/DDSL verbally where a child may be in imminent or immediate danger from suspected abuse. This takes priority over all other duties.

### b. Leaving full disclosures to the DSL where possible

All staff, where possible will leave the DSL/DDSL to take full disclosures from children as they have specific training.

### c. Referring Initial Concerns to the DSL, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting (all staff)

Brief notes should be made at the time or as soon as possible after there is a suspicion that is being referred to the DSL (CPOMS may be used at all stages). They should include:

- i. Date and time of observation

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- ii. Place and context of observation
- iii. Facts

## **Procedure:**

Use CPOMS.

Remember to keep to factual information and not assumption or interpretation. Use the child's own language rather than translating it into your own words. Be aware that your report may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency and even possibly at a criminal hearing. Make additional records of discussion that takes place.

## **d. If staff other than the DSL have to take a disclosure**

Should a child make an initial disclosure of abuse (of any type) to staff, and staff are unable to ensure the DSL/DDSL takes the disclosure, staff will:

- i. Listen to the child, keep calm and offer reassurance without questioning.
- ii. Remain impassive – reassure and not form or pass judgement on any party verbally or otherwise.
- iii. Observe visible signs of abuse e.g. bruising but not ask children to remove clothing.
- iv. Listen to the child but refrain from asking questions e.g. 'What happened next' as this may compromise a police investigation.
- v. Accept what a child says without challenge, reassure them that they are doing the right thing and that you recognise that what they are doing is difficult.
- vi. Not lay blame and criticise either the child or the possible perpetrator.
- vii. Not promise confidentiality – explain that they have done the right thing, who you will need to tell and why.
- viii. Make detailed notes of what the child says, preferably word for word.
- ix. Note the date and time of disclosure.
- x. Note the place and context of disclosure.
- xi. Once a verbal referral is made, ensure school records are updated with the information within 24 hours and as soon as possible.

## **e. Possible Physical Abuse (Bruises, Burns, Scars etc.)**

Should a member of staff suspect physical abuse a body map sheet should be completed (paper based or CPOMS report). Again the date, time, place, context of noticing the potential abuse should be documented. The DSL/DDSL should be alerted to the report as soon as possible.

## **f. Referrals made in Term Time/School Time**

During school/term time the DSL/DDSL is advised to refer Child Protection/Safeguarding issues to the local authority.

## **g. Out of school/term time e.g. weekends**

Occasionally staff may be alerted to CP/Safeguarding concerns e.g. it is possible to Facebook message a user without having access to their account. Should staff have such concerns they should refer these directly to the local authority/local Safeguarding Children Partnership using the following contact details.

Front Door for Families (Brighton and Hove) - 01273 290400/01273 335905 (out of hours number) West Sussex MASH - 01403 229900/033 022 26664 (out of hours number).

The staff member should email/telephone the DSL to alert them to what has happened and what they have done. Please note that it is a criminal offence to ignore potential safeguarding issues at any time.

## **h. Referrals to Local Authorities/local Safeguarding Children Partnerships**

- i. These should be made by appropriate school staff where possible e.g. The DSL. If a case is referred to the DSL, the DSL should make the referral within 24 hours no matter what he/she deems is the level or urgency. If the case is deemed as urgent because the child is at risk, the referral should be made before the child goes home where possible.
- ii. Parents/carers should be informed of the referral immediately unless doing so would put the child at risk. In these cases, the advice of the local authority/local Safeguarding Children Partnership should be sought.

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- iii. If the DSL/Headteacher feels that the appropriate action has not been taken by the Local Authority/Safeguarding Children Partnership after the first referral, they should re-refer stating their reasons for doing so.
- iv. Referrals should be made using the appropriate local authority referral process FDFP (Brighton and Hove), MASH (West Sussex), SPOA (East Sussex)

## 4. Staff Concerns About Other Staff

- a. Should staff have concerns about other staff members with relation to child protection and safeguarding, these will be reported verbally to the DSL and/or Headteacher immediately. Even if completely innocent of a safeguarding/child protection concern, if a staff member is participating in ill-advised activity then steps need to be taken to protect their career and reputation.
- b. Staff should follow up the verbal report with a written concern within 24 hours. This report should detail the nature of the concern, any relevant times/dates/places and be signed and dated.
- c. The Headteacher or the DSL will contact the LADO (the Local Authority Designated Officer) with appropriate information.
- d. If the complaint is about the DSL, DDSL or Headteacher then the CEO of RET and the LADO should be contacted immediately.

RET Central Office: 01372 363 628

Local Authority Designated Officer: Darrel Clews

## 5. Children Missing in Education

For advice and guidance please read the RET Children Missing in Education policy.

## 6. Trips and Off-Site Events

- a. Each trip or off-site event will have a risk assessment which takes safeguarding of children into account.
- b. Each residential trip will have a risk assessment which takes safeguarding of children into account and refers to any risk assessment completed by the trip company/prover/accommodation.
- c. Each Trip Leader will be briefed by the Headteacher/DSL regarding procedures both before a trip takes place and should there be a safeguarding concern whilst the trip is taking place (in and out of school hours).

## 7. Day to Day Issues

- a. DSLs/Safeguarding staff should telephone their RET Lead Adviser or the RET CEO or Safeguarding Lead for advice on specific complex cases or referrals. Advice should be sought where the school has not had experience of dealing with a specific situation.
- b. Schools should plan PSHE and Tutor Time/Assembly curriculum and consult the DSL where there are sensitivities e.g. in RSE delivery (Relationships and Sex Education).
- c. Teachers should be mindful of the fact that within the curriculum there will be opportunities to discuss some issues which some children might find sensitive and/or disturbing. Care will be taken particularly with regard to discussion about families and their make-up. Assumptions about family members and the presence of both parents should be avoided both in discussion and the presentation of materials.
- d. Teachers should be mindful of the fact that physical contact with children is ill-advised save for when necessary e.g. in PE and Drama where demonstrating specific skills/poses.
- e. Physical restraint should only be used where one child is endangering the safety of others, themselves or physical property. A report should be completed following use of restraint by the staff member restraining (and any staff/student witnesses) as soon as possible afterwards and submitted to the Headteacher and DSL.
- f. Staff should be mindful that contact via private telephone, social media, online shared gaming etc. can be misconstrued and is ill-advised and should use school systems only to discuss school business.
- g. For children who are at risk, the school may be the one stable place from which they can expect security and reassurance. It is important not only to be alert to potential abuse, but also to support and help children through difficult times. This includes providing them with coping skills that can help avoid situations and dealing with the emotional difficulties following should they experience such situation.

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- h. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms. These include bullying including cyber bullying; physical; sexual; sexual harassment; 'upskirting'/'downing trousers'; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence. Staff should report any such behaviours to their DSL/DDSL.
- i. Support in school — pastoral care  
All form tutors and subject teachers are responsible, in conjunction with other school staff, for the pastoral needs of the children in their care. This includes maintaining opportunities for children to share their concerns as appropriate.
- j. Online Safety  
Staff planning PSHE and tutor sessions should be familiar with the June 2019 DFE guidance on 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools'

## 8. Inter-Agency Liaison and Working with External Services

### a. Inter-Agency Meetings

At times, relevant school staff will be called upon either to contribute information to or participate in meetings involving external services. These might include:

- Strategy discussions
- A child protection review conference
- Family group conferences – for Children in Need (CIN), in a range of circumstances where a plan is required for the child's future welfare
- Professionals' meetings – at which representatives from different professions are asked to meet to discuss children and their families with a view to providing support or making recommendations regarding the next stages of involvement
- Core Group Meetings – meeting with a 'core' group of professionals associated with the family are asked to meet to review the progress of actions decided at case conferences and register view.

### b. Providing Appropriate Information

At these meetings, appropriate staff should be appropriately prepared to report information about:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Academic achievement
- Behaviour and attitude
- Relationships with peers and social skills
- Physical appearance and readiness for school
- Contact with parents/carers
- Specific incidents of interest
- CP concerns if appropriate to forum

### c. Information Collection/Delivery

Prior to these meetings, class teachers and any other adults working closely with the child should be asked for their comments. Following the meeting, relevant staff should be informed of any action they need to take as a result of the meeting.

### d. The Child Protection Register

There are two types of Child Protection Plan:

Child in Need or CIN Section 17 (where children require intervention but this may be a supportive measure)  
Child Protection or CP Plan Section 47 (where a child is/has been in a situation associated with significant risk)

#### i. Primary Transfer

Schools should ensure that they have collected and read CP files containing CIN or CP plans during the primary transfer process and that they have a chronology of events (CPOMs may be used for file transfer and chronologies).

#### ii. Leavers

Where children with CP files (CIN or CP) leave the school, the original files must be securely transferred to the new school.

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## iii. Off Roll with No Receiving School

If the child is removed from roll with no receiving school, a referral must be made immediately to the local authority by the DSL and the CME (Children Missing in Education) policy should be consulted/followed.

## iv. Storage of Child Protection Files

Any hard copy Child Protection files (CP, CIN or otherwise) should be kept separate from the main school file in a locked cabinet and a locked office. This should not be the same office as the main school files are located.

## v. Ensuring information is shared appropriately

Children who have a CP file should have a recognisable 'marker' on their main file e.g. a coloured sticker or electronic code.

## vi. Access to CP files

CP files should not be accessed by all staff, only those who are involved in the child's support e.g. The DSL, The Head of Year.

## e. Early Help

Once a referral is made to the local authority, they will assess which service is best suited to helping the child and/or family. In some circumstances they may refer to 'Early Help'.

### i. What is Early Help?

Early Help are family services set up by the local authority who provide help and support before a child needs child protection intervention e.g. a family coach.

### ii. Referrals

Sometimes a school is able to refer directly to early help if it has exhausted all internal support without success or if it is felt that a child needs specific intervention. The DSL will make the decision as to whether or not to apply for Early Help if it is accessible and seek the permission of parents/carers.

## 9. Honour Based Abuse and FGM Referrals (Female Genital Mutilation)

### a. Honour based abuse includes forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing and any practice that is against British law

### b. Definition of FGM

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

### c. Reason for Emphasis of Importance

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

### d. Suspicion of Honour Based Abuse

- i. Any staff member who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child under 18 must immediately report this to the police personally. This is a statutory duty and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.
- ii. The duty does not apply in cases where a child is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. However, this should still be reported using the 101 number with the DSL/DDSL present where possible and the DSL should refer the case to the local authority within 24 hours and immediately if a child is at imminent risk of danger.
- iii. Staff should NOT examine children or ask to see any part of their body related.
- iv. Further advice can be obtained from the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.
- v. Any staff member who suspects impending or occurred breast ironing, forced marriage or other honour-based violence must verbally report immediately to the DSL who will immediately refer to the Local Authority and may call the police if they suspect a crime has happened or is about to happen.

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## 10. Referrals for Extremism and/or Radicalisation

- a. Referrals for Extremism including Radicalisation should be made through the normal local authority process by the DSL (or other staff if they cannot reach the DSL) – [PreventReferralsbrightonandhove@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:PreventReferralsbrightonandhove@sussex.pnn.police.uk).
- b. Where the DSL/staff member has concerns there is a Department for Education telephone helpline 020 7340 7264 that can be used to discuss individual cases.
- c. The DSL/staff may also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk) but this email IS NOT for use for emergency situations.
- d. In an emergency, call 999 or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you think someone is in immediate danger; think someone may be travelling to join an extremist group; see or hear something that may be terrorist related.

## 11. Referrals for Sexual Violence

- a) Even if a victim requests otherwise, if you suspect that a child has been raped or subject to another form of penetrative or sexual assault, the DSL should report this to the police as well as making the referral to the local authority.
- b) If it has already been reported to police, the DSL should contact the school police liaison or such like to ensure the child is supported in school.
- c) Confidence cannot be promised by any staff member.
- d) A risk assessment should be immediately written by the Headteacher and DSL (and updated as appropriate when meetings or information sharing occurs). This should be informed by the Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool.
- e) If there is such an allegation in place, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any shared classes. This is NOT an assumption of guilt, it is in the best interests of both parties as per DFE Guidance (December 2017).
- f) The Headteacher and DSL should also give thought to other times where the children may be in close proximity e.g. lunch hall, playground, public transport and put measures in place to prevent the contact.
- g) The Headteacher should not wait for a local authority or police investigation or outcome before making decisions on balance of probability using the risk assessment in place with regard to consequences for individuals.
- h) If either party are finding it difficult to attend school because of the close proximity and request a school transfer, they should be supported to make an appropriate move.

## 12. Sexual Harassment

- a) Sexual harassment can come in physical or non-physical forms. It includes 'upskirting', name calling and verbal abuse, online harassment and physical touching of clothing or body parts where consent has not been given.
- b) Sexual harassment can be mistaken for banter or childish behaviour. It should however be recognised and taken seriously.
- c) If sexual harassment is identified, this should be reported by staff to the DSL/DDSL verbally and appropriate steps taken to involve parents and the local authority as appropriate and decide whether a risk assessment is needed.
- d) The DSL/DDSL should seriously consider whether to make a referral to Early Help or to the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Partnership.

## 13. Online Abuse/Inappropriate Images

The following websites may be used by professionals within the school to seek help and advice e.g. in removing online content:

- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline>
- <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>



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- <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/811796/Teaching\\_online\\_safety\\_in\\_school.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf)

- If there is an allegation of indecent pictures being taken ('Youth Produced Sexual Imagery'), made or passed by children under 18, the school must refer this to the police (usually through the DSL).
- If there is an allegation of abusive/inappropriate messaging staff should ask children to screen shot where possible and the DSL/Headteacher will decide whether a local authority referral should be made.
- If the DSL or another staff member thinks that a child is at immediate risk of harm because of images or text sent/received, they should telephone the police and the local authority by the end of the school day.
- Where possible, staff should not look at indecent images made or passed by children to ascertain their risk. The DSL/DDSL should take advice and handle these matters.
- Where it is not possible to ascertain who has sent/received images, or in instances where multiple children are involved it may be necessary to investigate further and for appropriate trained staff to look at phones and ask other children for screen shots and written statements of when things were sent/received, in what context and what was sent and received.
- Investigating staff should always consider that images or text may have crossed platforms (across different social media sites or apps) and not limit their investigation to one social media site.
- Headteachers should make decisions about consequences on balance of probability and not wait for investigation of multiple platforms.
- If a teacher sees sexual images or text relating to sexual behaviours of a child under 18 outside school hours, and they cannot reach their DSL, DDSL or Headteacher, they must speak to the police and make a local authority referral immediately (see 2g and h in this procedure).
- If a member of staff finds inappropriate images on a device or in print at school e.g. on a student's phone this should be referred to the DSL immediately. If possible, they should remove the device from the location/person and hand it to the DSL.
- Staff members should not seek to view inappropriate images (as in the Searching and Screening Advice from the DFE), they should alert the DSL instead.
- Staff should NEVER copy inappropriate images to their own electronic devices.

## 14. Allegations of Abuse made against other children (Peer on Peer Abuse)

- Most cases of children hurting children will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy, this procedure should be used where there are safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour
  - Is serious and potentially a criminal offence.
  - Could put children in the school at risk.
  - Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
  - Involves sexual exploitation or harassment e.g. indecent exposure.
  - Involves repeated physical harm e.g. bruising.
- If a child makes an allegation of abuse against another child
  - Tell the DSL immediately and record the allegation but do not investigate.
  - The DSL will contact the local authority and police liaison (where possible) and follow their advice.
  - The DSL will put a risk assessment in place for all children involved.

## 15. Notifying Parents/Carers

- We will notify parents/carers as soon as possible in the event of a disclosure to us or when we have a concern about the welfare of a child (within 24 hours). Other staff will only talk to parents/carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.
- If we believe that notifying parents/carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team and/or with the police (as appropriate) before doing so.

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- c. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.
- d. We will consult the police and social care before speaking to a parent/carer if we or other parties believe that a crime may have been committed.
- e. Where we are asked by the police or children's services to delay contact with a parent, we will ask the relevant service for confirmation of this instruction in writing (an email will suffice).

## 16. Record Keeping

- a. The school will keep detailed and comprehensive notes and chronologies with dates, times and staff signatures/codes. This includes records of follow up actions, phone-calls and meetings.
- b. All records are to be kept on CPOMS as either typed entries or electronic attachments.
- c. We will share this information only with appropriate agencies in line with local safeguarding procedures. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR will not prevent us from keeping comprehensive records on CPOMS.
- d. Schools will retain data in line with the Trust's data retention schedule.

## 17. Reviewing Safeguarding Cases

- a. The school will review the cases of students with Safeguarding concerns on a regular basis. Timely actions will be taken by the school to move the case forward, chase external services with the aim of improving the circumstances for the child

## 18. Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

- a. Staff should be mindful that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. If they demonstrate certain behaviours, these may mistakenly be attributed to their SEND.
- b. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:
  - i. assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury;
  - ii. relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
  - iii. children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like;
  - iv. bullying- without outwardly showing any signs; and
  - v. communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- c. The pastoral education plan  
Children who are 'looked after' should have their own pastoral education programme which will be drawn up in discussion with social services, the Virtual School Headteacher, foster parents and the child themselves.

## 19. The Criminal Exploitation of Children and Children at Risk of Partaking In Or At Risk From Serious Violence

- a. School staff should be trained to recognise the common signs that a child is being exploited criminally, is partaking in or at risk of violent crime.
- b. Some of these signs are (not exhaustive): new tags or nicknames, unexplained gifts, possessions or cash, bruising and/or self-harm, refusal to talk to adults in school, significant decrease in academic performance, frequent absence from school, increasingly withdrawn, outbursts of violent/aggressive/irrational behaviour.
- c. Should staff recognise these signs in children, they should make an immediate verbal referral to the DSL/DDSL as per school policy for safeguarding referrals.
- d. Safeguarding staff should ensure that all details are logged and that parents and Local Authority Safeguarding Children Partnerships are informed.
- e. If behaviours/warning signs do not dissipate as a result of parental contact and referrals, the school should re-refer to the Local Authority and chase actions.