

**Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Reference Guide for Staff 2025-26**
Pocklington CE (VC) Infant School

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Safeguarding Contact List

Role / Agency	Name and Role	Contact Details
School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Lynn Bartram	head@pocklington-infants.org.uk 07596851996
School Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Janna Braidley Mel Saltmer	janna.braidley@pocklington-infants.org.uk mel.saltmer@pocklington-infants.org.uk
Key Pastoral Staff – if applicable	Mel Saltmer	mel.saltmer@pocklington-infants.org.uk
SENDSCO	Lynn Bartram	head@pocklington-infants.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Governor		
Chair of Governors		
Lead Governor – Filtering and Monitoring		
Lead Governor – AP		
CLA Designated Teacher	Lynn Bartram	head@pocklington-infants.org.uk
E-Safety Coordinator	Tom Babington	tom.babington@pocklington-infants.org.uk
ERYC LADO	Referral of allegations against staff and volunteers	Please always use the LADO email to initiate contact with LADO LADO@eastriding.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing	NSPCC advice line is available here for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally	0800 028 0285 from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday or via email help@nspcc.org.uk

1. Purpose and Aims

1.1 It is essential that everybody working in a school understands their safeguarding responsibilities – as outlined in Part One and Annex A of [KCSiE, 2025](#). Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. Our school is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance and effective safeguarding practice. All staff ensure that any decisions made are in the best interests of the child. The definition of safeguarding is taken from [KCSiE 2025](#) (Paragraph 3) and defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- ☐ Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- ☐ Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- ☐ Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ☐ Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- ☒ Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2 Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern. The Governing Body will ensure that at a strategic level, our school will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils/students and work together with agencies to ensure that our school has effective arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or where significant harm is suggested.

1.3 Our school is a community and all those directly connected, staff members, governors, parents, families and pupils, have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure for all.

1.4 This policy provides the basis for good practice within the school for safeguarding work. It should be read in conjunction with the East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership (ERSCP) Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and the Strategic School Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and guidance and reflect what the partnership considers to be safe and professional practice in this context.

2. Child-Centred Approach

2.1 Our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, spiritual and moral development of the individual child, enabling all children to thrive.

2.2 Our school recognises the importance of creating an environment that helps children feel safe and respected. The school understands the need for children to speak openly and to be confident that they will be heard. This includes recognising that both mental and physical health are crucial to safeguarding and the welfare of children.

2.3 All adults within the school, including permanent staff, supply staff, temporary staff, volunteers, parents and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and need to understand and be competent in safeguarding practices in school and receive training, support and information to achieve this.

2.4 The school works proactively with parents to build a solid understanding of the school's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in certain situations. As a starting point, whenever possible, we will always discuss concerns with parents/carers and seek their consent to share information. However, this cannot always be guaranteed and will depend upon the case specific issues and concerns.

3. Staff Responsibilities

3.1 The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has overall responsibility for safeguarding (including online safety and IT Filtering and Monitoring)

- DSL - Lynn Bartram

To ensure there is always appropriate cover for this role. We also have a Deputy DSL:

- Deputy DSL - Janna Braidley and Mel Saltmer

The DSL will be on our school's leadership team and the role of DSL (and the deputy) will be explicit in their job description. The DSL (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. The DSL will be available to provide guidance, support and advice on all safeguarding matters, **concerns must be shared immediately and discussed with the DSL**, who will advise on the actions required and decision making and ensure thorough, accurate and timely recording. This will cover the rationale for decision making and when referrals are and are not made.

3.2 The school has a nominated Safeguarding Governor responsible for safeguarding to champion good practice, to liaise with the Head Teacher and DSL and to provide information and reports to the governing body. There is also a nominated Governor for Filtering and Monitoring - and also Governor with lead oversight of the use of Alternative provision.

3.3 The **case manager for dealing with allegations** of abuse made against school staff members is the Head Teacher. The case manager for dealing with allegations against the Head Teacher is the Chair of Governors.

3.4 All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to pupils who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child and how to report safeguarding and concerns in relation to Online Safety and Filtering and Monitoring. All staff need to be able to recognise behaviours and physical signs linked to behaviours that put children in danger/risk of significant harm. All staff know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected.

All staff should be aware that the minimum age of marriage is now 18 years of age. Staff know how to meet the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL (or a deputy) and where appropriate children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This may include but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual harassment, sexual violence and assaults, harmful sexual behaviour, transphobia, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos. Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. Staff should be aware that these can be in and out of the education setting, in person and online.

3.5 Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. KCSiE [2025](#), stipulates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding approach, with zero tolerance and where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. KCSiE [2025](#), Part 5, provides guidance about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools and colleges

It should be recognised that these issues will occur and be accepted that they do, and so schools will have procedures in place to deal with them. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender+ (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBTQ+, and pupils with SEND. We recognise that these children can be targeted by other children, we provide a safe space for these children to speak out and share their concerns with members of staff. Pupils are protected from 'upskirting,' bullying (+ cyber), homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism, and all other forms of discrimination.

Staff have familiarity with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the Human Rights Act 1998 and recent reforms to the Act and how they apply to safeguarding

Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents.

Children may not feel ready to or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this should not stop staff from having a level of 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL. Professional curiosity is where a person explores and understands what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or taking a single source of information and accepting it at face value. It means:

- ☐ testing out your professional assumptions about different types of families.
- ☐ triangulating information from different sources to gain a better understanding of family functioning which, in turn, helps to make predictions about what is likely to happen in the future.
- ☐ seeing past the obvious.

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the DSL or equivalent and managed in line with the school child protection policy and procedure. Victims of harm should be supported by the school's pastoral system, and their wishes and feelings considered and that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them. The DSL will retain oversight of this.

3.6 There is an Online Safety policy regarding the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g., iPads. The school uses Securly and Securly Aware to manage Filtering and Monitoring. For online safety, there is within the policy, guidance about children accessing the internet whilst they are at school. The policy reinforces the importance of online safety, including making parents aware of what your school asks children to do online (e.g., sites they need to visit or who they will be interacting with online)

3.7 Artificial Intelligence has the power to transform education by helping teachers focus on what they do best: teaching. This marks a shift in how technology is used to enhance lives and tap into the vast potential of AI in classrooms. We look to consider the risks and challenges alongside the opportunities and benefits continue to work to ensure the safety and reliability of technology, including AI tools, to support teachers and learners. The guidance below support the assessment of risk: [Generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) in education - GOV.UK](#)

4. Supporting Children

4.1 Our school recognise that children who are abused or witness violence (e.g., Domestic Abuse) are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. The school recognises children who witness (see,

hear or experience) domestic abuse are victims and that witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on children.

They may feel helpless, humiliated and have some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives. We accept that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

4.2 The school is involved in the Humberside Police/East Riding LA Operation Encompass Domestic Abuse alert system and work with SiET to support Humberside Police Pitstop Meeting whilst supporting pupils appropriately when alerts are received. All staff are aware of the need to be alert to the possible indicators of Domestic Abuse including coercive control and refer concerns to the DSL.

4.3 Our school will support all pupils by:

- ☐ Ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning. Through RHSE and other curriculum contexts, pupils are encouraged to talk about feelings and deal positively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn to for help and advice.
- ☐ Providing pupils with a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties and ensuring that pupils are taught about safeguarding so that they 'recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.'
- ☐ Supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence and encourage the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying.
- ☐ Ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety including filtering and monitoring, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly. School will also meet all the requirements of the DfE Guidance Relationship.
- ☐ The school will consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
- ☐ The Behaviour Policy is aimed at supporting all pupils to meet the expectations of school, identifying vulnerable pupils who may require additional support. The behaviour policy outlines measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- ☐ Clear procedures are in place for addressing and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviours, sexual violence and sexual harassment. These procedures are designed to be easily understood and easily accessible. Children who have experienced sexual harassment and violence can display a wide range of responses and school will remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to their needs.

- Playing a crucial role in preventative education and preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. There is a culture of zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, bi-phobic and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy, pastoral support system and a planned program of RSE / RSHE delivered regularly, the content of which is in line with statutory guidance and for example focuses on - tackling issues such as boundaries; consent; body confidence; stereotyping; and sexual harassment.
- Acknowledging the importance of 'contextual safeguarding,' which considers wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare (Working Together to Safeguard Children, (2023) and [KCSiE](#) September (2025).
- Liaising with a range of Early Help agencies that support the pupils such as Family Help and the School and Community Team, Health Services, Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services, Special Educational Support Services and the Educational Psychology Service.
- Using the Local Authority Safeguarding and Family Help (providing Early Help) support structures as outlined in – 'Effective support for children, young people and families in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Guidance for all practitioners in working together to support families and safeguard children.'
- Monitoring pupil absenteeism and unexplainable and/or persistent absences as a potential safeguarding concern and precursor for a child missing from education.
- Consider additional support for pupils who have experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- Acknowledging that a child who is looked after (CLA) or has been previously looked after by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CLA and previously looked after children (PLAC) safe. It is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.
- Be mindful when applying disciplinary measures, such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), by considering the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group and need for reasonable adjustments.
- It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage. Teachers have a legal duty to report FGM.

- Recognising that to safeguard a pupil, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, schools and colleges can reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint. Guidance is available here: [Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK](#)

5. Safeguarding Procedure

“Never Do Nothing – Do the basic things well - It can happen here”

5.1 If a child discloses that he or she has been abused or exploited in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should consider ways to:

Receive - Listen actively, open body language, accept, non-judgmental. Use TED (tell, explain, describe)

Reassure - ‘You’ve done the right thing by coming to me’, reassure child that you have listened and hear what they are saying; don’t promise what can’t be delivered

Respond - Tell what you are going to do and do it. Ensure child is ok before leaving

Report - As soon as possible, to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) in school

Record - Vital – facts, no opinions – When? Where? Who? What?

Review – Take responsibility to follow up any referral with a DSL

In addition:

- Inform the DSL without delay and follow school safeguarding procedures.
- Complete CPOMS

Dealing with an allegation or concerns shared by a child from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL.

Further information about what to do if you are worried that a child is being abused is available here in advice for practitioners: [Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners - GOV.UK](#)

5.2 All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded using the established school system and procedures. Where appropriate, the Signs of Safety model (SOS) will be used to capture the child’s voice and their daily lived experience (Three Houses).

5.3 Our school will continue to support any pupil leaving the school about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including Safeguarding and welfare concerns, in line with the requirements of KCSiE 2025.

5.5 The DSL will share information on a need-to-know basis and confirm that concerns are being addressed. If a staff member feels that concerns persist or the response is inadequate the DSL should be challenged and if necessary, the matter escalated

5.6 School will endeavor to have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home in order to reduce the risk of not contacting family members where welfare and/or safeguarding concerns are identified.

6. Safer workforce and managing allegations against staff and volunteers

6.1 Our school will prevent people who pose risks to children from working in our school by ensuring that all individuals working in any capacity at our school have been subjected to safeguarding checks in line with Safer Recruitment best practice and KCSiE, 2025. In addition to obtaining an Enhanced DBS certificate (or other level as appropriate), anyone who is appointed to carry out regulated activity will require additional suite of pre-employment checks (e.g., Barred List) to ensure that they are suitable for the role being undertaken. This is in line with Part Three of KCSiE 2025

6.2 We will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us with evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our school. The Single Central Record must cover the following people: all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party and supply staff who work at the school. The Single Central Record is located on the school business managers secure drive.

6.3 Every job description and person specification, and job advertisement will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder. The school website will echo this within our 'work for us' section. The school will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online.

6.4 We will ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last 3 years.

6.5 We have a procedure in place to manage allegations against members of staff, supply staff and volunteers (and to respond to Low level concerns) in line with ERYC procedures. We will communicate with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), through consultations and referrals when needed.

6.6 Supply teachers – we will consider all allegations against an individual not directly employed, where disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, (for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency) and ensure allegations are dealt with properly and communication with supply agency and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is continued throughout the investigation.

6.7 There is an agreed Staff Code of Conduct policy which is compliant with 'Safer Recruitment,' and includes - acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships, low level concerns and communications including the use of social media. The staff Whistleblowing, Code of Conduct policy and Low-Level Concern Policy are located on google shared 'staff admin' drive or hard copy in the office.

6.8 For agency and third-party supply staff, schools and colleges must also include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member of staff. This is in line with the requirements of [KCSiE, 2025](#) Part 3.

7. Staff induction, training and development

7.1 All new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given a safeguarding induction that includes training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the Safeguarding Policy, staff Code of Conduct, KCSiE Part One or Annex A, and other related policies. Staff should also have access to Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023). Training will be refreshed in line with ERSCP guidelines.

7.2 Induction will be proportionate and linked to staff members' and governors' specific roles and responsibilities.

7.3 The DSL will oversee and coordinate staff safeguarding training and training records, including Online Safety and Filtering and Monitoring and attend the annual DSL Briefing led by SiET. DSL and other key staff identified as requiring this, should undertake more advanced / specialist training and disseminate the information and training to staff, through regular updates.

7.4 All staff members of the school will undergo safeguarding training (which is regularly updated and at least every three years). This training should be regularly updated. All staff will have access to ERSCP multi-agency safeguarding training and e-learning, alongside that provided by the LA and SiET.

7.6 We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g., supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the

opportunity to take part in school safeguarding training if it takes place during their period of work for the school and if identified, as necessary.

7.7 The DSL will provide briefings to the school on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) in line with Working Together 2023 and KCSiE [2025](#). These will occur annually or more frequently when necessary.

7.8 The school will maintain accurate and up-to-date records of staff induction and training.

8. Confidentiality, consent and information sharing

8.1 Our School recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.

8.2 The Head Teacher or the DSL will disclose any information about a pupil/student to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.

8.3 All staff members must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep key information secret or to themselves which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.

8.4 All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.

8.5 All staff members who meet children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

8.6 We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.

8.7 Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional, will act upon and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. School will also adhere to the requirements of [Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK](#) (DfE, [June 2025](#)). This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations regarding the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL. A fear of sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote welfare and protect the safety of children.

9. Contractors, service and activity providers and work placement providers

9.1 Our school will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures. We require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.

9.2 The school will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with KCSiE, 2024. If the requisite assurance is not obtained and statutory and school expectations not met then permission to work with our children or use our school premises may be refused.

9.3 When we commission services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.

10. Whistleblowing and complaints

10.1 The school will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Safeguarding, which does include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the Head Teacher, the chair of the governing body or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). [Blowing the whistle to the Department for Education - GOV.UK is available for all staff for further guidance.](#)

10.3 We have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice. We also acknowledge that Low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g., suspicion, complaint, an allegation. Procedures are in place for confidentially sharing and handling of low-level concerns.

10.4 The school will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our Safeguarding arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

11. Site security

11.1 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and to report concerns that may come to light.

11.2 The identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out of the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge while on the school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance. The visitor policy is located on the shared google drive / staff admin and in the school office.

11.3 School will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.

11.4 It is recognised that incidents in schools are rare, but we will have in place simple procedures to ensure site security awareness and preparedness (lockdown, invacuation, evacuation and bomb threat procedures). The aim is to deter terrorists and other security threats and help keep pupils, staff and visitors safe in the event of an incident.

12. Quality Assurance

12.1 We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.

12.2 We will complete an audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the ERSCP and use the audit tool provided by them for this purpose.

12.3 The school's senior management and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

APPENDIX 1– Responding to Concerns – Advice to Staff

- React calmly promise CONFIDENTIALITY not SECRECY
- Be aware of your non-verbal messages
- Keep responses short, simple, slow and gentle
- Do not stop a child or parent who is talking freely about what has happened
- Observe and listen but only ask open ended questions if you need to clarify but this may be better left to the DSL or others

The use of 'TED' questioning may be appropriate

- Tell me what happened
- Explain what you mean
- Describe how it made you feel

Or other open-ended type questions e.g.

- What happened?
- Where were you?
- When did this happen?
- Who was there?
- How did it make you feel?

If you have difficulty in understanding the child or parent's communication method, reassure them that you will find someone who can help.

- Tell the child or parent they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Avoid making comments or judgements about what is shared.
- Tell the child or parent what will happen next and be honest.

Make a written note on a 'Record of Concern sheet': or equivalent – insert details

- What is said and Who is present
- What, if any, questions you asked and the responses
- Anything else that happens after the child discloses
- Ensure legibility, full dates & clear signature
- Maintain strict confidentiality

If you see or are shown marks or injuries pass the information to the DSL immediately

Appendix 2 – Categories of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

Sexual Abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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 is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate.
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide.
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal.
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance.
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby.
- Distrust of familiar adults, for example, anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger.
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

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.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Physical Abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks

- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso.
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns.
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

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.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Emotional Abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Unwillingness or inability to play.
- Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection

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 because of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access

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

Signs that MAY INDICATE Neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers Low Self Esteem
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking.
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low Self Esteem

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts, or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money, or new possessions.
- associate with other children involved in exploitation.
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners

[CSE Docs and Link](#)

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store, and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in several locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes, and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A few of the indicators for CCE and CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from
- their home
- have been the victim, perpetrator, or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g.
- knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs,
- handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed.
- internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap.
- house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity.

- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing