

Policy Statement

At Weaver Trust we are determined to ensure that every possible measure has been implemented to safeguard and protect the children in our care.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's and learner's health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. **It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.** Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

If you have a safeguarding concern about a pupil in our Trust please contact school using the information below: Staff and Trustees with key Safeguarding & Child Protection roles in school:

- Designated Trust Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Annette Williams: annette.williams@weavertrust.org
- Safeguarding Trustee: Mr Michael Jackson: chair@weavertrust.org
- Designated Barnton Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Alison Lawson: head@barnton.cheshire.sch.uk
- Deputy Designated Barnton Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Cerri Morris: deputy@barnton.cheshire.sch.uk
- Barnton Safeguarding Officer / Family Support Worker: showell@barnton.cheshire.sch.uk
- Barnton Inclusion Manager/ Safeguarding Teacher: rwieckowski@barnton.cheshire.sch.uk
- Barnton Safeguarding Governor: Julie Brandreth: chair@barnton.cheshire.sch.uk

All of the above staff can be contacted via the school telephone number: (01606) 74784.

- Designated Grange Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Annette Williams: annette.williams@weavertrust.org
- Deputy Designated Grange Safeguarding Lead: Sara Albiston: head@grange-pri.cheshire.sch.uk
- Grange Safeguarding Officer / Family Support Worker: erock@grange-pri.cheshire.sch.uk
- Grange Inclusion Manager/Safeguarding Teacher: Harriet McGilloway inco@grange-pri.cheshire.sch.uk

- Grange Safeguarding Governor: Irene Hodkinson chair@grange-pri.cheshire.sch.uk
All of the above staff can be contacted via the school telephone number: (01606) 288010.

If you wish to report a concern to the Local Authority, please contact:

- **The Integrated Access & Referral Team** on (0300) 123 7047 or (01606) 275099
Monday to Thursday: 8.30 – 5pm, Friday: 8.30 – 4.30pm
- **Out of Hours Team Emergency Duty Team:** (01244) 977277
Monday to Thursday: 4:30pm to 8:30am, Friday: from 4pm.

24 hours at weekends and bank holidays.

1. Introduction

1.1.1 At Weaver Trust, we fully recognise the contribution we can make to protect children and support pupils in school. There are three main elements to our Safeguarding Policy, which applies to all children and staff, and to the wider community.

- **Prevention:**
 - By promoting a positive atmosphere, through focussed teaching and effective pastoral support to pupils.
- **Protection:**
 - By following agreed procedures, and ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
- **Support:**
 - By providing support mechanisms to all pupils and Trust staff, and to those who may have been abused.

1.2 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with trusted adults, help all children and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse.

1.3 All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. At Weaver Trust, we will ensure that no member of our community will encounter discrimination, relating to their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

2. Aims

Weaver Trust will:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHCE, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to recognise when they are at risk, and how to get help when they need it. (Ofsted Inspecting Safeguarding Guidance, September 2018).
- Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare, parenting skills and violence free relationships. (This is included in the delivery of Citizenship and PSHCE.)
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.
- Ensure that we comply with all statutory guidance relating to the Prevent Duty.
- Ensure that staff understand their duty to safeguard pupils against Female Genital Mutilation. (KCSiE 2019:31)

3. Multi-Agency Approach

Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018

- 3.1 All staff, including support and lunchtime cover, are aware of the key staff to speak to in relation to Safeguarding concerns. Children know to tell an adult, and information is then passed on to the Head Teacher / Safeguarding Officer, or Designated Lead Teacher in her absence.
- 3.2 Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the Pan- Cheshire Safeguarding Procedures. The DSL or Safeguarding Officer will contact the Integrated Access and Referral Team (Tel: 0300 123 7047), to discuss the concern and get advice about next steps. In an emergency the DSL or Safeguarding Officer will contact Cheshire Police on (0845) 458 0000.
- 3.3 Where the level of concern does not identify a child protection issue, but where safeguarding concerns are identified, the DSL or Safeguarding Officer will contact the Safeguarding Children in Education team (SCiE: 0151 356 6614) for advice.
- 3.4 Where the level of concern does not identify a safeguarding issue, but could lead to more serious concerns if left, staff must follow the procedures set out in the Team Around the Family (TAF) guidance. This may involve signposting to or involving more appropriate agencies for support and

may involve the school in acting as lead agency in a TAF. This is a voluntary process where families agree to work with relevant agencies to address their difficulties. These agencies could include: housing, health, probation, and young people's services, as well as education. Good practice would be for the family to be involved in choosing the agency who leads the TAF process. TAF meetings are held at regular six weekly intervals.

- 3.5 **Early Help and Prevention** – Identification of the need for early help and support for children and families is vital. All staff are aware they can signpost or refer parents to the Family Support Worker for early help and support with a variety of issues including: housing, finances, relationship issues and managing children's behaviour. (KCSiE:41)
- 3.6 Staff are trained to identify children and young people who show signs of needing support with their emotional well-being and mental health. These concerns would be discussed with parents and where appropriate the child would be referred for school support, or school from an appropriate agency such as CAMHS .
- 3.6 Staff are kept informed about Safeguarding procedures by an annual safeguarding briefing, and by feedback at Staff Meetings and through training input from the Safeguarding Children's Partnership & SCIE teams. Weaver Trust use a company called 'Safeguarding in Schools' to keep up to date with all changes in safeguarding legislation and procedures. All staff are aware of possible indicators for different forms of abuse and neglect. This is also referred to as part of the Safeguarding Briefing for all new staff, volunteers and students. Staff are signposted to relevant, up-to-date Safeguarding & Child Protection documents which contain detailed information about these issues.
- 3.7 The school will ensure that other adults in school know to consult with the Head/DSL or the Family Support Worker where there are Safeguarding or child protection concerns. This is ensured through a 'Safeguarding Briefing' which takes place on the first day of working within the school and adults sign to confirm they have received the briefing, which outlines safeguarding responsibilities and whistleblowing. All staff, students and volunteers are given a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) document, which clearly covers all responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding within schools.
- 3.8 Parents of children in the school will be informed of the school's duties and responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures by access to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is available on the school's website, or by request.

3.9 Weaver Trust will ensure that the Head Teacher, Designated Lead Teacher, Family Support Worker and the nominated Trustee for Safeguarding attend training relevant to their roles. (See Appendix A)

4. Specific Duties:

4.1 **The Prevent Duty (June 2015):** Its aim is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

4.1.1 To ensure compliance with the Prevent Duty, the Head Teacher and Trustees of Weaver Trust will:

- Ensure that those in leadership positions establish and use appropriate mechanisms to understand and report risks of radicalisation.
- Implement appropriate staff training so that staff understand the risk, and build their capability to deal with it.
- Ensure that in accordance with the new Ofsted Framework 2019, new curriculum for Relationships Education, 'Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education' (2019) and with reference to the new guidance 'Teaching online safety in school' 2019, all children will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which covers RSE, eSafety and issues of our time.
- Communicate and promote the importance of the duty.
- Ensure that staff implement the duty effectively.
- The Head and Trustees will ensure that the school continues to carry out risk assessments where there is the potential for children to be drawn into terrorism.
- The school will work in partnership with the SCP.
- Be aware about the criminal exploitation of children, including 'County Lines'.
- All staff will ensure that pupils' access to the internet is monitored, with regard to keeping them safe from exposure to extremist material. Cheshire West and Chester's internet filtering system is in place to support this.
- Pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum, alongside the school's core values and the British Values, which aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain, which contributes to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

4.2 **Female Genital Mutilation:** under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2013 it is an offence to subject a girl or woman to FGM in the UK; to assist a girl to perform it on herself; for UK nationals or permanent residents to perform FGM abroad; or to assist anyone to perform FGM abroad.

4.2.1 Safeguarding girls at risk of harm through FGM poses specific challenges because the families involved may give no other cause for concern with regard to their parenting responsibilities or

relationships with their children. However, there remains a duty for all professionals to act to safeguard girls at risk of FGM. Anyone at Weaver Trust who has information that a child is potentially or actually at risk of significant harm should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will inform Children's Social Care and the police according to their statutory responsibility.

- 4.2.2 Other 'honour-based' violence such as: forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing should be dealt with and escalated. Where staff are concerned, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency, who will inform Children's Social Care and the police according to their statutory responsibility.
- 4.3 All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues may arise in the form of **Peer on Peer Abuse** which includes: bullying, cyberbullying, physical abuse, sexual violence and harassment, gender based violence, sexting and initiation-type violence. In such instances, our Designated Safeguarding Lead would be informed.
- 4.4 All staff should be aware of Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which criminalises the act of '**Upskirting**'. The Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) defines 'up skirting' as a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment, such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person's clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission. (KCSiE 2019, page 27)
- 4.5 All staff and volunteers working at the school are subject to **Safer Recruitment Procedures**, including checks against the 'Teachers Sanctioned in Other EEA Member States' List.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection.
- 5.2 Parents, Trustees and every adult working in, or associated with the school needs to understand the need for confidentiality and all staff, students and volunteers will be made aware of the importance of respecting issues around confidentiality when they receive their Safeguarding Briefing.
- 5.3 Adults must never guarantee confidentiality to a child. If a child asks the adult to keep a secret, the child needs to be advised that the information may need to be shared with others for the benefit of the child.
- 5.4 The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 introduce new elements to the data protection regime, superseding the Data Protection Act 1998. Practitioners must

have due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share personal information. However, the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe. (H.M. Government Information Sharing, July 2018)

- 5.5 The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt. This information is confidential and is only shared with the people who need to know.
- 5.6 Parents are informed of any referral made by school unless school are advised by the Police or Children's Social Care that this would not be appropriate.

6. Referral and Record Keeping

- 6.1 Staff may become aware of safeguarding concerns for a child in a number of ways. This may be due to something a child has shared with them in school; it may be because of an anonymous report from another parent or neighbour, contact from another agency, for example, Children's Social Care or through concerns about a child's appearance or behaviour in school.
- 6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should assess all information available to the school about a child and refer to the Integrated Access & Referral Team (i-ART): (0300) 123 7047 for advice. If they are advised to make a referral this should be done online using the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) within 48 hours of the telephone conversation. This form can be found at i-art@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk. The person making the referral will need to record the name of the person they spoke to on the i-ART team. The DSL/Safeguarding Officer should follow up their online referral within 24 hours to ascertain the outcome.
- 6.3 **Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice.** Our school 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.
- 6.4 When a member of staff, student or volunteer has a concern regarding the welfare or behaviour of a child this is reported to the Head Teacher/DSL or to the Family Support Worker. All manner or concerns e.g. family issues, behaviour and safeguarding, must be uploaded onto CPOMS. If the person receiving the disclosure from a child is a volunteer or a student, they should share this information with the child's class teacher, who will support them in following the safeguarding procedures.

- 6.5 If a child is reporting physical or sexual abuse, the person receiving the disclosure should report this to the DSL/FSW, in person, immediately after the information has been received. And, then record using CPOMs.
- 6.5 All verbal conversations regarding the safeguarding of a child should be promptly recorded onto CPOMS.
- 6.6 What to do if you are concerned about a child:
- Talk to the child about what you have observed or your concern. It's okay to ask questions, but avoid leading questions. Use open ended questions (TED: Can you tell me what happened? Can you explain what you mean? Can you describe what happened?)
 - Listen carefully and gather as much information as possible
 - Remember it is not our job to investigate the concern, but to act on it.
 - Explain to the child your responsibility to take action if what they tell you suggests they or another child is at risk of harm.
 - Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, using CPOMS or in person.
 - In circumstances where a member of staff is unable to report the risk of significant harm to the DSL, then they must contact I-ART on 0300 123 7047

7. Allegations Against Professional Carers

- 7.1 This school operates vetting and Safer Recruitment practices.
- 7.2 Procedures are in place to support all staff who have concerns about the conduct of any adults working in school, either in a professional role or in a voluntary capacity. Staff are referred to the **Whistleblowing Policy** at their Safeguarding Briefing and this is discussed with them as part of their induction. They understand that it is their responsibility to refer any concerns about an adult in school to the Head Teacher.
- 7.3 In the event of an allegation about the behaviour of a teacher or other professional in this school the Head Teacher will follow Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Procedures and will inform the Designated Officer or LADO. Allegations made against the Head Teacher are reported to the Chair of Trustees and then to the Duty LADO: Telephone: 0151 337 4570
- 7.4 All staff will have access to and be made aware of **The Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People**. This document can be found on the shared server/safeguarding folder. A copy of this is also available in school from the Family Support Worker.

7.5 Regardless of any action taken by the LADO, an internal investigation should take place, but this should be done following discussion with the LADO so as not to jeopardise any tandem processes.

8. Vulnerable Child/Child at Risk

8.1 We recognise that some children with behavioural difficulties and special educational needs and disabilities can be vulnerable to abuse. All members of staff, who work with children with special educational needs; profound and multiple disabilities; sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse (See Appendix 2). We identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or keep themselves safe, and provide this support through a broad and balanced curriculum and targeted intervention.

9. Monitoring

9.1 Our school monitors children about whom there are concerns by the class teacher talking to the Family Support Worker and other staff are made aware as necessary. In most cases parents and carers will be aware of the concerns and understand why their child is being monitored.

9.2 When a child is being monitored it is the class teacher and any support staff involved with the child, plus the Family Support Worker who are involved and informed.

9.3 Concerns are discussed, and recorded on the CPOMS system.

9.4 Attendance is monitored carefully to address poor and irregular attendance without delay (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019). Absences are followed up by contact with parents/carers. To enable us to do this, we have at least two up to date emergency contacts on record for each pupil. The **‘Children Missing in Education’** policy will be adhered to where necessary. Any staff member who is concerned about a child’s attendance must share this concern with the Head Teacher.

9.5 If a child transfers or leaves, the DSL/Head Teacher or Family Support Worker makes direct contact with the Head Teacher of the school to which the child is transferring. Any safeguarding or welfare records are then forwarded using CPOMS, or in person where possible and a declaration is signed as proof of handover.

9.6 Our school recognises the need to attend Core Groups, Child Protection Case Conferences, Child In Need and Team Around the Family meetings or to send a written report if attendance is not possible. In most cases the Family Support Worker will attend these meetings and liaise with teaching/support staff and parents/carers and children in order to complete written reports for the meeting.

10. Support

10.1 This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- 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;
- support from our Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)
- the implementation of school Behaviour Policy
- a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays - vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families;
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interest to do so;
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately to Safeguarding and child protection situations.

11. Review and Evaluation:

This policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, parents, Governors and Trustees, under the guidance of the 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' policy. Trustees will review it every year, in line with our Policy Review Cycle, unless there are significant changes and therefore a need to review it sooner.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-Bullying
- Special Education Needs
- Health and Safety
- Inclusion
- Looked After Children
- E-Safety
- IT/Acceptable Use
- Attendance Policy
- PSCHE (SRE) Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1

Trust Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities: Training & Qualifications

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Annette Williams

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children One Day Refresher (September 2019)

Barnton Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities: Training & Qualifications

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Alison Lawson

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2018)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Cerri Morris

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2019)

Family Support Worker/Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Howell

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children One Day Refresher (16/7/19)
- Enhanced Safeguarding for Staff in Pastoral Roles (Anchored Schools July 2019)
- Managing Sexualised behaviour in primary schools (NSPCC 8/01/2018)

Inclusion Manager/Safeguarding Teacher: Mrs Wieckowski

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2018)

Grange Staff with Safeguarding Responsibilities: Training & Qualifications

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sara Albiston

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (June 2019)

Family Support Worker/Safeguarding Officer: Emma Rock

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (June 2018)

Inclusion Manager/Safeguarding Teacher: Harriet McGilloway

- Safeguarding Children in Education Basic Awareness (3/9/18)

Understanding and identifying abuse and neglect

(Extract from, 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (March 2015))

5. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
6. Child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts, and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, including, via the internet. In the case of female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off event. Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.
7. There are a number of warning indicators which might suggest that a child may be being abused or neglect

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;

- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

9. There are four main categories of abuse and neglect: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Each has its own specific warning indicators, which you should be alert to.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) statutory guidance sets out full descriptions.

Physical abuse

10. Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.
11. Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens.¹ Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse.
12. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries;
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and
- Children with unexplained:
 - o bruises or cuts;
 - o burns or scalds; or
 - o bite marks.

Emotional abuse

13. **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. ²
14. Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be in a position to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include, not

giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

15. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

1
Brandon et al., Building on the learning from Serious Case Reviews: A two year analysis of child protection database notifications 2007-2009, Department for Education, 2010; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-on-the-learning-from-serious-case-reviews-a-2-year-analysis-of-child-protection-database-notifications-2007-to-2009>

2 Davies and Ward, Safeguarding children across services: messages from research, Department for Education, 2011; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-across-services-messages-from-research>

Sexual abuse and exploitation

16. Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.
17. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch 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 commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and

- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

18. **Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual 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 don't take part in education.

Neglect

19. Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.
20. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse. It is important that practitioners remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action.³ However, while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify.
21. The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Children also develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger child might be normal behaviour for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so you should also be alert to parent-child interactions which are concerning and other parental behaviours. This could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health. By understanding the warning signs, you can respond to

problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused.

Female Genital Mutilation

22. Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. This is illegal in the UK.
23. Risk factors for FGM are low level of integration in UK society; they have a mother or a sister who has undergone FGM; girls who are withdrawn from PSCE; visiting a female elder from their country of origin/taking a long holiday to their country of origin; and talking about a 'special procedure' to become a woman. Symptoms may include difficulty walking, sitting or standing; spending longer than normal in the bathroom; frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems; prolonged or repeated absence from school or college; reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations; confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear; and talking about pain or discomfort between her legs (Female Genital Mutilation Act 2013)

Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs, or alcohol, over food, clothing or warmth for the child.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse. **Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:**

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- Children who are left hungry or dirty;
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- Children who fail to receive basic health care⁴ ; and
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

- 2 Brandon, Glaser, Maguire, McCroy, Lushey and Ward, Missed opportunities indicators of neglect – what is ignored, why and what can be done, Department for Education, 2014;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/indicators-of-neglect-missed-opportunities>
- 3 Powell, C. (2003) Early Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect: A Multi-Professional Delphi Study, Child Abuse Review, 12,1, pp. 25-41

Approved by:

Chair of Board

C.E.O

Date:
