

## *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*

Written By	<p><b>Annie Gent, Deputy Head Pastoral, and Heidi Berry, Head of PrePrep – EYFS.</b></p> <p><b>In consultation with:</b></p> <p><b>Alastair Poulain, Andrew Treavett, Rebecca Horlock, Sarah Edwards</b></p> <p><b>School DSL:</b> ag@sherborneprep.org</p> <p><b>EYFS:</b> hb@sherborneprep.org</p>
Date For Formal Review	<p><b>October 2021</b></p> <p>This policy will be formally reviewed and ratified by the governors on a yearly basis during the Michaelmas term Governors’ meeting. The policy is informally reviewed and updated each term during the Pastoral Subcommittee meeting.</p>
Governor Ratification	<p><b>October 2020 by Sarah Edwards with full ratification in Governors meeting Michaelmas 2019. Governors for Safeguarding: Sarah Edwards (governor@sherborneprep.org)</b></p>
ISI Codes NMS	<p><b>A6 E1 B2 B15</b></p> <p><b>4 &amp; 11.1</b></p>

*The child protection policy covers The Prep School, Pre-Prep and EYFS*

## Section 1 - Introduction

Sherborne Prep School fully recognises that the welfare of the children is paramount and takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in its care. The needs and wishes of each child will be put first. Throughout this document, 'child' refers to a young person under the age of 18.

Sherborne Prep School's Child Protection Policy has been written in accordance with Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Partnership, following its Procedures & Guidance, accessed its website: <https://pdscp.co.uk/>. It reflects the Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures (on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website), Working together to Safeguard Children and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2020.

The contact details for the school's child protection staff and also the local authority are set out in Section 6: Information about the Management of Safeguarding.

**This document sets out how the school seeks to address child protection concerns and is necessarily long. However, ANYONE can refer child protection concerns directly to Social Services on 01202 228866/ [MASH@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@dorsetcc.gov.uk) and if anyone has concerns about extremist behaviour or attitudes, they can telephone the Police on 101, or the DfE telephone helpline on 020 7340 7264 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 or email, [counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk).**

This policy consists of ten sections, and refers to a number of related documents:

- A. The school's policy for dealing with concerns about a child
- B. The procedures for dealing with concerns about a child
- C. The school's arrangements for handling allegations of abuse against members of staff, volunteers and the head
- D. The school's staff code of conduct
- E. The school's whistle-blowing procedures
- F. Details of the school's recruitment policy
- G. The Internet Safety Suite of Policies which include use of mobile phones in the Prep and EYFS settings
- H. Information about the management of safeguarding and the appointment of the designated person
- I. The training of the designated person, staff, volunteers and the head
- J. Arrangements for reviewing the school's policies related to child protection
- K. The school's arrangements for fulfilling other safeguarding and welfare responsibilities

### Related documents

In writing this policy and these procedures we have had due regard to Section 175 / Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the following statutory guidance, non-statutory advice and other advice:

1. Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020) (KCSiE)
2. Disqualification under the Childcare Act (August 2019)
3. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)
4. Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2019)
5. Information Sharing (In WTSC 2019))
6. Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (March 2015 – revised July 2015)
7. The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015)
8. The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
9. SEND Code of Practice 2015
10. Mental health and behaviour in schools (March 2016)
11. Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future (February 2016)
12. Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (August 2019)

13. Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information (last updated December 2016)
14. Children Missing Education (September 2016)

## 1.2 Statement, Principles and Aims

Sherborne Prep recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount. We take seriously our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care.

### Principles

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2019, HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The Governing Body will act in accordance with Section 175 / Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the supporting statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2019 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

The Governing Body is accountable for ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and that all policies, procedures and training are in place and effective.

Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership advise that governors receive an annual report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Nominated Governor in order to help monitor compliance with statutory responsibilities. Sherborne Prep writes three reports to Governors annually.

The Dorset Standards also include that each school and college completes and submits to the PDSCP an annual audit of its safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including an action plan. The DSL at Sherborne Prep completes this audit with the governor allocated to safeguarding.

All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation, whatever their:

- age
- health or disability
- gender or sexual orientation
- race, religion, belief or first language
- political or immigration status.

Governors, staff and regular volunteers in this school understand the importance of taking appropriate action and working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies in order to safeguard children and promote their welfare. See Annex B for information given to visiting staff.

The aim of this policy is to:

- afford protection for all pupils
- enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

- promote a culture which makes this school a safe place to learn and in which children feel safe

This policy applies to the Head Teacher, all staff, including supply and peripatetic staff, regular volunteers (i.e. those who come into school once a week or more or 4 times in a 30 day period), governors or anyone working on behalf of the school.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- always acting in their best interests
- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- involving them in decisions which affect them
- never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination, including through use of technology
- ensuring the curriculum affords a range of opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe, particularly when using technology
- exercising our duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 by ensuring all staff attend 'Prevent' training in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour and by assessing the risk of our pupils being drawn into terrorism
- supporting attendance and taking action if a child is missing school regularly
- appointing a senior member of staff from our leadership team as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and ensuring this person has the time, funding, training, resources and support to perform the role effectively
- appointing at least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure there is always someone available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- appointing a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are Looked-After (in care) and to work closely with relevant staff on how additional funding can support the progress of these children
- ensuring that staff working with Looked-After Children have information appropriate to their role regarding, for example, the child's care arrangements, legal status and contact with birth parents
- making sure all staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the safeguarding policy and child protection procedures and also understand their individual responsibility to take action
- ensuring that all those named above (i.e. DSL and Deputy DSLs; Designated Teacher; Head Teacher, all staff and regular volunteers) have training appropriate to their roles as set out in statutory guidance or recommended by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board/Partners
- identifying any concerns early and providing appropriate help to prevent them from escalating, including working with parents/carers and other agencies as appropriate. The DSL is trained in initiating Early Help and using a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and the school has a close working relationship with two children's counsellors
- proactively sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children with agencies who need to know, and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately
- acknowledging and actively promoting that multi-agency working is the best way to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm
- taking the right action, in accordance with PDSCP inter-agency safeguarding procedures, if a child discloses or there are indicators of abuse
- keeping clear, accurate and contemporaneous safeguarding and child protection records

- recruiting staff and volunteers (including host families) safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements and also making sure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has undertaken safer recruitment training
- providing effective management for staff through induction, support and regular update training appropriate to their role
- adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers which includes acceptable use of technologies (including mobile phones), staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- ensuring our online safety process includes appropriate filters and monitoring systems
- ensuring staff and volunteers understand about 'whistle blowing' and how to escalate concerns about pupils or staff if they think the right action has not been taken to safeguard children
- promoting a culture in which staff feel able to report to senior leaders what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour or breaches of the school Code of Conduct by their colleagues, having faith that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken
- dealing appropriately with any allegations/concerns about the behaviour of staff or volunteers in accordance with the process set out in statutory guidance
- understanding our responsibility of information sharing. See Annex A for 7 Golden Rules of information Sharing

This child protection policy forms part of a suite of policies and other documents which relate to the wider safeguarding responsibilities of the school. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)
- Internet and acceptable use policies for pupils and staff, which include use of mobile data enabled technology, photography and recording
- Safer recruitment policy and procedures
- Procedures to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers, including referring to the Disclosure and Barring Service, prohibition for teaching (when appropriate)
- Whistle blowing policy
- Procedures to respond appropriately when children are missing education
- Anti-bullying procedures and policy
- Mental Health policy
- Personal Development – PSHE/Leadership Curriculum
- Missing child Protocol
- Behaviour, sanctions and rewards policy
- GDPR- data protection policy.

These policies and procedures are accessible either through the school website or on the staff database system and in hard copy in the teaching and support staff workrooms. All staff are expected to sign a contract every year stating that they have read and understood all pertinent policies and what their role with regards to safeguarding is. A record of signed contracts is held by the DSL. These policies are provided and discussed during induction of new staff.

## Section 2 - Child Protection Procedures and Recognising Abuse

These procedures should be read in conjunction with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, part 1, part 5 and Annex A. (Governors must also read and understand part 2 KCSiE 2020.)

### 2.1 What is Child Protection?

Child protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

### 2.2 What is significant harm?

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and in each case, require discussion with the statutory agencies: Children's Social Care and Police.

### 2.3 Purpose of procedures

The procedures in this policy explain what action should be taken if there are concerns that a child is or might be suffering harm. Procedures alter slightly depending on the type of 'harm' the child is at risk from.

### 2.4 Responsibilities and Roles

All adults in the school have an individual responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by taking appropriate action. This includes taking action where there are child protection concerns.

The Governing body is accountable for ensuring the school has an effective child protection policy which should be reviewed annually and available publicly, such as on the school website.

The statutory safeguarding guidance for schools: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' states that all schools and should have 'a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility' for safeguarding.

The person on the Senior Leadership Team who takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding in this school is: **Annie Gent**

The nominated person on the local governing body, working closely with school staff, is: **Sarah Edwards**

This school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is the person who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding. Any concerns about children should be discussed with / reported to the DSL who will decide what action to take including referring to Children's Social Care or Police as

appropriate. The DSL (and deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns. More information about the DSL role can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in this school is: **Annie Gent**

The school also has at least one Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

The Deputy Safeguarding Leads are: **Alastair Poulain, Andrew Treavett, Heidi Berry and Rebecca Horlock (EYFS)**

In addition, Dorset Children's Social Care can provide advice and guidance on safeguarding and child protection matters.

See Appendix 2 for contact details.

All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- DfE guidance (2020) – Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2019) – published by HM Government
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures & Guidance, accessed through the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website [www.dorsetlscb.co.uk](http://www.dorsetlscb.co.uk)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance (2015)

## 2.5 What is child abuse?

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2020).

### Recognising child abuse – signs and symptoms

Keeping Children Safe in Education is clear: 'All school and college staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection'.

Recognising child abuse is not always easy, and it is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether or not child abuse has definitely taken place or if a child is at significant risk. They do, however, have a clear individual responsibility to act if they have a concern about a child's welfare or safety or if a child talks about (discloses) abuse. They should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and always act in the best interests of the child.

Sherborne Prep School recognises that child abuse can happen, anytime, anywhere. The school understands that abuse can take place wholly on line or that technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Appendix 3 details examples of possible indicators of each of the four kinds of abuse and the details of children and the courts, family members in prison, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse and homelessness.

Remember that any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, **MUST** be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

#### **i) 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.

#### **ii) Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from 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, though it may occur alone.

#### **iii) Sexual abuse**

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

#### **iv) Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance use. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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



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

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

## **2.6 Allegations made by children about other children, including peer on peer abuse**

If one pupil causes harm to another, it is not always necessary for it to be dealt with through a referral to Children's Social Care: sexual experimentation within 'normal parameters', bullying and fighting, for example, are not generally seen as child protection issues. All incidents will, however, be taken seriously, parents/carers will be contacted and an investigation will be instigated by the DSL (in conjunction with relevant staff) and where necessary external agencies will be consulted. A full action and support plan will be drawn up where appropriate (please see Anti Bullying protocol for further information). All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse and that this can be between or among children of any gender. This is most likely to include but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- Initiation/hazing type violence rituals

Allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded via iSAMS under the pastoral logging system as anti-bullying or child protection. Further guidance on and for managing allegations or incidents of peer on peer abuse is laid out 3.7. The school has a clear Anti Bullying Protocol and policy.

The nature and severity of the allegation or concern will determine whether staff will implement the school's anti-bullying or other school procedures or whether a referral needs to be made to social workers or the Police. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted if there is any doubt about the right course of action.

A referral to Children's Social Care will be made in all cases of domestic abuse relating to young people who experience physical, emotional, sexual and/or financial abuse, or coercive control, in their intimate relationships.

A referral to Children's Social Care will be made if a child or young person displays sexually harmful behaviour. This involves one or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are *inappropriate for their age or stage of development*. It is also considered harmful if it involves coercion or threats of violence or if one of the children is much older than the other.

The process for managing sexually harmful behaviour can be found in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the PDSCP website. In brief, a multi-agency meeting should be convened by Children's Social Care following a referral and an action plan agreed.

A school risk assessment will be put in place, preferably by way of a meeting, which includes parents/carers and other professionals where they are involved.

Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as ‘normal’ between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

## 2.7 Youth produced sexual imagery

School staff are advised to use the term ‘youth produced sexual imagery’ rather than ‘sexting’ to ensure clarity surrounding this issue.

Professionals consider YPSI to be ‘sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet’. Young people, however, are more likely to interpret YPSI as ‘writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know’. Similarly, many parents think of YPSI as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images.

This sections covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under 18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks, particularly if the imagery is shared further, including embarrassment, bullying and increased vulnerability to sexual exploitation, which need careful management.

The type of incidents covered are:

- A person under the age of 18 who creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 who shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18, with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 who is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

This section does not include the sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse. In this instance the School will use reporting procedures described earlier in the policy.

All incidents of YPSI must be dealt with as a safeguarding concern. The procedure for dealing with such incidents is as follows:

- If staff become aware of such an incident, they must report it to the DSL as soon as possible. Disclosures about such incidents can happen in a variety of ways. A young person affected may inform a member of staff, or a friend or parents may inform someone in school, or inform the police directly.
- Any direct disclosure by a young person should be taken very seriously and handled sensitively. A young person who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in School is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issues themselves
- Where an electronic device is involved staff should confiscate the device and hand it to the DSL without any content first being viewed

- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate School staff. This initial review meeting aims to establish:
  - Whether there is an immediate risk to the young person or young people
  - If a referral should be made to the Police and/or Children's Social care
  - If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person – in most cases, imagery should not be viewed
  - What further information is required to decide on the best response
  - Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown
  - Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services
  - Any relevant facts about the young people involved which would influence risk assessment
  - If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
  - Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved – in most cases parents should be involved
- An immediate referral to the Police and/or Children's Social Care (Via Dorset MASH) will be made if at this initial stage:
  - The incident involves an adult
  - There is reason to believe the young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special needs)
  - What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent
  - The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
  - We have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, (for example the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply, the School may decide to respond to the incident without involving the Police or Children's Social Care. In this instance subsequent interviews with the children involved will ensue. The School may escalate the concern at any stage if any of the above becomes apparent.

Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform the parents would be made in conjunction with Children's Services and/or the Police who would take the lead in deciding when the parents should be informed.

If, at any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and /or the Police immediately.

The decision to respond to an incident without involving the Police or Children's Social Care would be made in cases where the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the School's pastoral care support system. The School can seek the advice of the Dorset Safeguarding Standards Advisor. The decision will be made by the DSL after consultation with the Head Teacher and input from other members of staff where appropriate. The decision will be recorded.

Adults should not view YPSI unless there is good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible responses to incidents should be based on what the DSL has been told about the content of the imagery.

If it is necessary to view the imagery the DSL will:

- Never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal
- Discuss the decision with the Head Teacher
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the Head Teacher
- Ensure viewing takes place with two members of staff present in the room, both of whom are ideally members of Senior Leadership team with one at least being the same sex as the Pupil involved
- Ensure wherever possible that viewing takes place on School premises
- Record the viewing of the imagery in the School's safeguarding records including the date, who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions.

If YPSI has been unavoidably viewed by a member of staff either following a disclosure from a young person or as a result of a breach in the firewall, the DSL will make sure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support.

Once a report is made to the Police, the report is recorded and the Police will conduct an investigation. The use of Outcome 21 by the Police means that schools can be confident that the Police have discretion to respond appropriately in cases of YPSI and to record incidents in a way in which should not have a long-term negative impact on young people.

Whilst young people creating and sharing sexual imagery can be very risky, it is often the result of young people's natural curiosity about sex and their exploration of relationships. Hence, teaching about safeguarding issues can prevent harm by providing young people with skills, attributes and knowledge to help them navigate risks. The Personal Development programme in the senior part of the school complements online safety and biology lessons to educate the children in the school. Children in the lower years are also provided with a comprehensive Personal Development programme that covers keeping themselves safe and their rights and responsibilities.

To minimise peer on peer abuse Sherborne Prep School uses a number of different procedures:

- In addition to form tutors, children can choose an independent tutor to add additional emotional support and guidance.
- There is a robust PSHEE – Personal Development scheme embedded into the school curriculum overseen by the Deputy Head Pastoral, taught by the DHP and a team of dedicated staff.
- The school uses 'anti-bullying week' to undertake a number of different activities to support cohesion and collaboration as a school.
- The children are taught how to stay safe online through PD and ICT lessons.
- The six Values of Sherborne Prep School are referred to daily and serve to remind children of how they should treat one another.
- The house system provides team-manship opportunities and develops relationships across the year groups.
- We have a stringent Anti Bullying policy (part of the safeguarding suite of policies) with a protocol that we follow to completion when there is an allegation of bullying. This is

available for all children and parents through the website and a succinct children specific version is kept in the children's prep diaries.

- Parental workshops/lectures are held in the Lent term.
- A clear statement is made to all pupils and staff through assemblies, training and PD that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up"

Allegations of any type of bullying are investigated with the school's anti-bullying policy in mind. There is a protocol, however in some instances a different approach may be necessary. Full records of any incidents with plans and outcomes are kept on the iSAMS database.

The school operates a clear set of guidelines for acceptable use which are laid out in the Internet and Acceptable Use policy.

The school mirrors the approach and guidelines laid out in KCSiE 2020 as detailed below:

*'There must be procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. This applies to all staff whether they are employed, contracted, a volunteer or student.*

***This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.***

### ***Allegations of abuse made against other children***

*All Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. All staff should be clear about their school's policy and procedures with regard to peer on peer abuse. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. The policy should reflect the different forms peer on peer abuse can take, make clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". It should be clear as to how victims of peer on peer abuse will be supported.'*

See Appendix 3 for further detail on Peer on Peer abuse and Sexual Harassment.

## **2.8 Pupils engaging in under-age sexual activity**

Sexual activity where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of young people who are *consenting partners of a similar age* is not usual. Designated Safeguarding Leads will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether to refer or take advice from social workers, taking into account such things as any imbalance of power, wide difference in ages or developmental stages etc.

Where a child is under the age of 13 penetrative sex is classified as rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 so must be reported to social workers in every case.

The inter-agency safeguarding procedures, on the DSCB website, have more information about under-age sexual activity.

## **2.9 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person

under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CSE is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange (sexual activity in return for something); all children and young people have a right to be safe and protected from harm.

We recognise that any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of family background or other circumstances. We recognise that the long-term impact of CSE can lead to significant harm to physical and mental health.

Recognition of CSE is included in safeguarding training. Possible indicators of risk include the acquisition of new items without plausible explanation, isolation from peers, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, relationships with controlling older individuals or groups, and increasing secretiveness.

Due to the grooming methods used by abusers, it is common for young people not to recognise they are being abused and may feel they are 'in a relationship' and acting voluntarily. PD is used to educate children about recognising healthy relationships.

Any concerns re CSE will be discussed with the DSL who will take appropriate action including completing a PDSCP form. The School has due regard to both the PDSCP procedures and the DfE guidance Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from CSE (Feb 2017).

## **2.10 Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief**

All staff in this school will promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Some forms of abuse are linked to these and staff should strive to suspend professional disbelief (i.e. that they 'could not happen here') and to report promptly any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will seek further advice from statutory agencies, prior to contacting parents/carers.

## **2.11 Children missing education**

We recognise that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including the specific types of abuse detailed above and/or travelling to conflict zones.

Therefore, all staff will follow the school's procedure for dealing with unauthorised absence, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify vulnerable pupils and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Actions could include involving other professionals and, if any of the criteria are met, informing the local authority where a pupil's name has been removed from the school roll.

## 2.12 Children missing education and attendance

Sherborne Prep School follows the guidance set out in the government guidance Children Missing in Education September 2016.

Sherborne Prep understands its responsibilities where a child is missing education:

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission.

Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

The pupil can be removed from the admission register for particular reasons: See the SEN Code of Practice 2001 in relation to statements of SEN and the SEND Code of Practice 2015 in relation to EHC plans for detail of the expectations of local authorities in these circumstances or because of illness, unavoidable cause, religious holiday, or the local authority's failure to make the required transport arrangements.

Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England statutory guidance.

Academies and independent schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences under a similar safeguarding duty. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance.

Sherborne Prep operates a clear system of registration. Children are registered twice a day through the iSAMS database, and any absences with reasons are recorded daily. The school's admissions register is kept up to date and any change of contact details are requested and followed up by the school.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, Sherborne Prep records the information in the admissions register wherever possible including the name of the new school and the date when the pupil first

attended or is due to start attending that school. Children who will be home schooled are raised to the Local Authority and when the school has confirmation, the child is removed from the roll.

As per the guidance, Sherborne Prep will notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the regulations, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

*'Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register, the school must provide the local authority with: a) the full name of the pupil; b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives; c) at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives; d) the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable; and e) the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there.*

*All schools are required to notify the local authority within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admissions register about the pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admissions register at a standard transition point.'*

Further detailed information of this guidance can be found in the [policy for children missing education](#)

## 2.14 Responding to the child who discloses (talks about) abuse

All staff and volunteers will:

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Avoid showing shock or disbelief
- Observe the child's demeanour
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that the information will need to be shared with others. They will not promise to keep the information confidential or a 'secret'
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace and not interrupt if the child is freely recalling events. They will not stop him/her in order to find a 'witness' as this could inhibit the child from saying more
- Avoid asking questions or pressing for more information. Ask for clarification only. If questions are necessary they should be framed an open manner and not 'lead' the child in any way: Tell me.... Explain.... Describe...
- Reassure the child, if necessary, that s/he has done the right thing in telling
- Explain what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared
- Not ask the child to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school – including the DSL - or ask him/her or any other children who were present to write a written account or 'statement'
- Make an immediate, careful record of what has been said using the child's actual words wherever possible (not an interpretation of them). The written record will ideally be made on the standard School 'concern' form (Annex C). The record should include the date, time, place and those present during the conversation and be signed by the person taking the record. The record will be kept securely and handed to the DSL unless the allegation involves the Head Teacher or a member of staff including the DSL
- Preserve all evidence, for example any notes, messages, clothing, mobile devices



- Where physical injuries have been observed, these will be carefully noted but not photographed. The member of staff will not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the child's body
- Immediately tell the DSL unless the allegation is against a member of staff (in which case Head or Chair of Governors). If an accusation is made against the Head, the Chair of Governors and the LADO will be informed. In all cases the information will not be discussed with other adults (including parents/carers) or young people. The Chair of Governors, Nigel Jones can be contacted at [nigel.jones@chestersharcourt.com](mailto:nigel.jones@chestersharcourt.com)
- Discuss with the DSL whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse. This may need to be discussed with the person who disclosed.
- Liaise as necessary with all relevant professionals including the DSL and Children's Social Care
- Understand that such issues necessitate a high degree of confidentiality, not only out of respect for those concerned but also to ensure that evidence is not compromised by discussion in the public domain
- Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people or asking other people, such as parents. Social Care and Health and Police staff are the people trained to do this. Such action could cause more damage and interfere with possible criminal proceedings
- Remember that anyone can make a referral if necessary. Staff have a right and duty to refer potential or actual child abuse direct to the Local Authority Children's Services or the Police if the situation is an emergency and the DSL, Head, Chair of Governors or the Governor for Child Protection are not available and they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure a pupil's safety or if they feel that senior staff action is/has been inadequate and/or inappropriate
- - PDSCP: 01305 221196 [pan-dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:pan-dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)
- Where a member of staff makes a referral directly s/he should inform the DSL as soon as possible thereafter
- **If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately**
- Remember that any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, MUST be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

## 2.15 Responding to a child who discloses sexual violence or harassment

See Appendix 2 for link to local authority model report that dictates how a report should be managed. However, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- Reassuring the victim that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe;
- Not promising confidentiality at this initial stage. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
- Recognising a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust; this could be anyone in the school staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the

child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;

- Listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what etc.;
- Considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report. However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the needs to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way it is essential a written record is made;
- Only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by Children’s Social Care and/or part of a criminal investigation;
- Where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCCIS sexting advice. The key advice is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child wherever possible;
- If possible, managing reports with two members of staff present (preferably one being DSL or a DDSL). However, this might not be possible; and
- Informing the DSL (or deputy) as soon as practically possible, if the DSL is not involved in the initial report.

## Section 3 - Responses

### 3.1 Action Taken by the DSL

Any disclosure or indicators of abuse will be reported verbally to the DSL or Deputy straight away or, where they are not available and concerns are immediate, a referral will be made without delay to Children’s Social Care. In Dorset, these teams are known as ‘Help and Protection’ teams. Staff at schools with boarding provision can seek advice in the first instance from the single point of contact – the MASH, when the child’s home address is not Dorset. (See Appendix 2 for contact numbers).

Where the child already has an allocated social worker, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team will be contacted promptly. (See Appendix 2 for contact numbers).

A child protection file will be started in the child’s name, where the child is not already known to social workers. If a file already exists, the new information will be added to the chronology.

If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their views will be taken into account, the school has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child’s safety and that of other children.

The DSL will decide whether to contact parents at this stage, judging whether to do so is likely to place the child at risk of harm from their actions or reactions - for example in circumstances where there are concerns that a serious crime such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or induced illness has taken place, the DSL will not contact the parents before contacting statutory agencies. If in any doubt, the DSL or staff member will call the duty worker first and agree with him/her when

parents/carers should be contacted and by whom. The reason for the decision not to contact parents first will be recorded in the child's school child protection file.

A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.

Where there is no disclosure by a child but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together and that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

The PDSCP's 'Threshold Document' should be used to help clarify the pathway required for a child: whether concerns will be managed within the school; or with the help of other agencies as part of early help; or whether they require specialised support such as a social work assessment or referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). A hard copy of the threshold tool is held in the DSL's office. The DSL has been on Threshold training.

A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL should expect some feedback, although confidentiality might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome s/he can press for reconsideration and if following this, s/he still believes the correct action has not been taken, will refer the concerns directly to social workers.

It is important to ensure that even allegations that appear less serious are followed up and taken seriously, and that they are examined objectively by someone independent of the school. Consequently, the LADO will be informed of all children protection allegations or suspicions against a member of staff or volunteer at the School that come to the School's attention and appear to meet the criteria for referral, so that he or she can consult police and social care colleagues as appropriate. Any child protection allegation or suspicion against anyone outside the school will be referred to PDSCP.

When deciding whether to make a referral, following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Head and DSL should not make their own decision over what appear to be borderline cases, but rather the doubts and concerns should be discussed the LADO/ PDSCP. This may done tentatively and without giving names in the first instance. The school should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate allegations of abuse but should discuss their concerns with the LADO on a no names basis without identifying the family. If the LADO advises that sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the DSL will keep a date and time record of the conversation, noting what actions are to be taken and by who. The DSL will then confirm the referral in writing to PDSCP within 24 hours by using the inter-agency referral form (on PDSCP website). Any pre-existing assessments such as a CAF will be attached. If no response of acknowledgment is received within one working day, the DSL will contact PDSCP again.

Where there is no disclosure by a child but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies using the threshold tool.

The DSL will reassess the concerns following action when the situation does not improve for the child and, where appropriate, challenge inaction by external agencies.

### 3.2 Responding to concerns reported by parents or others in the community

Occasionally parents or other people in the local community tell school staff about an incident in or accumulation of concerns they have about the family life of a child who is also a pupil at the school.

If the incident or concern relates to *child protection*, the information cannot be ignored, even if there are suspicions about the motives of the person making the report. Members of staff will therefore pass the information to the DSL in the usual way.

It is preferable if the parent/community member who witnessed or knows about the concerns or incident makes a call to Children's Social Care themselves as they will be better able to answer any questions. They can ask for their name not to be divulged if a visit is made to the family. The DSL will advise accordingly and later confirm that this referral has been made.

If the parent/community member refuses to make the referral, the DSL will clarify that s/he (the DSL) has a responsibility to do so and will also need to pass on to social workers how s/he is aware of the information.

This process also applies to parents/community members who are also school staff. As professionals who work with children they cannot be anonymous when making the referral but can ask for the situation to be managed sensitively and, if necessary, for their identity to be withheld from the family if it will cause difficulties in their private life.

If practitioners have concerns that a child may be a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking then a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism as soon as possible (Working Together to Safeguard Children).

### 3.3 Referral Guidelines

The DSL will have regard for the criteria set out in KCSiE (Sept 2020) when determining whether to make a referral to the LADO or DSC (Dorset Social Care) as appropriate where a pupil or another person has:

Behaved in a way that caused a child to suffer or are at risk of suffering serious harm

Or

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child

Or

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children

Or

If there are concerns about a child's welfare and there are signs that a child is:

- Experiencing or may already have experienced abuse or neglect; and/or
- Likely to suffer significant harm in the future.

In considering a referral the DSL will differentiate between safeguarding children who have suffered or at risk of suffering serious harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies such as through a CAF.

#### Remember

Any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, MUST be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option. Any suspicion or concerns will be reported immediately to the DSL or a Deputy. During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a Deputy should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. However, if for whatever reason they are not available, the staff member will discuss their concerns immediately with either

- another senior member of staff or
- the duty worker in the Help and Protection Team – single point of contact (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - MASH)

Anyone can make a referral, not just the DSLs. Anyone who has made a referral should always follow up their concerns if not satisfied with the response. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action 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. If in doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety of the children. (KCSiE 2020)

It is important that everyone in the school is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for making a judgement about whether or not abuse has occurred and should not conduct an ‘investigation’ to establish whether the child is telling the truth. That is a task for social workers and the police following a referral to them of concern about a child. The role of school staff is to act promptly on the information received.

This applies regardless of the alleged ‘perpetrator’: whether the child raises concerns about a family member or someone outside school, a member of staff or another child/pupil.

A careful record will be made of what has been seen/heard that has led to the concerns and the date, time, location and people who were present. As far as possible, staff should record verbatim what was said and by whom. The record will be passed to the DSL.

The DSL will keep a record of the conversation with the duty worker and other social workers, noting what actions will be taken and by whom, giving the date and time of the referral. The referral will be confirmed in writing on the inter-agency referral form (available on the PDSCP website) as soon as possible and at least within 48 hours. Any pre-existing assessments such as through the Common Assessment Framework should be attached.

A school child protection file will be started in the child’s name, where the child is not already known to social workers. If a file already exists, the new information will be added to the chronology.

**See Appendix 4 for detailed record keeping guidance.**

### **3.4 Response from Children’s Social Care to a school referral**

- **Referral**

Once a referral is received by the team, a manager will acknowledge receipt of the referral to the referrer (usually the school DSL) and decide on the next course of action within one working day. When there is concern that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, this will be decided

more quickly and a strategy discussion held with the Police and Health professionals and other agencies as appropriate (Section 47 Children Act 1989).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or the referrer should be told of the outcome of the referral. If information is not forthcoming the referrer should follow up. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

- **Assessment**

All assessments should be planned and co-ordinated by a qualified social worker. They should be holistic, involving other professionals, parents/carers and the children themselves as far as practicable. Assessments should show analysis, be focused on outcomes and usually take no longer than 45 working days from the point of referral. School staff have a responsibility to contribute fully to the assessment and will be supported by the DSL (or a deputy) as required.

- **S47 Enquiries (regarding significant harm)**

The process of the investigation is determined by the needs of the case, but the child/young person will always be seen as part of that process and sometimes without parents' knowledge or permission. On occasions, this will mean the child/young person is jointly interviewed by the police and social workers, sometimes at a special suite where a video-recording of the interview is made.

- **The Child Protection Conference**

If, following the S47 enquiries, the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference (CPC) will normally be convened. The CPC must be held within 15 days of the first strategy discussion and school staff will be invited to attend - normally the DSL or Head Teacher. This person will produce a written report in the correct format (a pro forma is available on the PDSCP website). This will be shared with the child/young person and his/her family before the conference is held. A copy will also be sent to the person chairing the initial CPC at least 24 hours in advance.

More information is in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures ('Child Protection Conferences') on the PDSCP website.

If the referrer disagrees with the decisions made by social workers regarding the outcome of the referral, the conclusions of the assessment or any actions taken, the matter should be discussed and if necessary escalated to more senior managers (under the escalation policy available on the PDSCP website), *particularly* if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

### **3.5 Responding to allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers**

It is expected that all staff and Governors involved in the management of allegations of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer or former member of staff or volunteer will comply at all times with DfE Statutory guidance contained within KCSiE (2020) – the procedure to follow is to be found in Part 4 of KCSiE.

Rigorous recruitment and selection procedures as well as adhering to the school's code of conduct and safer practice guidance will hopefully mean that there are relatively few allegations against or concerns about staff or volunteers. However, if a member of staff, or any other person, has any reason to believe that another adult has acted inappropriately or abused a child or young person, or

has a concern that might indicate they would pose a risk of harm to children, they will take action by reporting to the Head Teacher (not the DSL if this is a different person). This must be done, even though it may seem difficult to believe that a colleague may be unsuitable to work with children, the risk is far too serious for any member of staff to dismiss such a suspicion without taking action. Doing nothing is not an option.

The following must be reported to the Head Teacher: allegations of behaviour that a member of staff or volunteer has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; the possibility of a criminal offence against or related to a child; and behaviours towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children. Even though it may seem difficult to believe that a colleague may be unsuitable to work with children.

If the allegation/concern is about the Head Teacher, the person with concerns will contact the Chair of Governors or his deputy (Fiona Ashley-Miller) in his absence, or the Designated Officer (also known as the LADO) in the Local Authority Safeguarding and Standards Team (without informing the Head Teacher).

The person suspected of abuse may not be approached on the matter. In cases where serious harm is suspected, the Police should be informed from the outset.

This procedure relates to members of staff who are currently working in the School regardless of where the abuse is alleged to have taken place.

In all cases of allegations against staff or volunteers, the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors will contact the Designated Officer (LADO) without delay and follow the correct procedures as set out in the separate Staff disciplinary, grievance and whistleblowing policy. This must comply with Part Four of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2020.

If an allegation requires immediate attention, but is received outside normal office hours, the allegation should be referred to the Dorset Social Care out of hours service (Tel: 01202 738256) or the local police and the LADO informed as soon as possible.

Any allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with as quickly as possible and without unnecessary delay. The School's priority will be to achieve a quick resolution of that allegation in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for any child involved and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. All such allegations will be dealt with as a priority without delay.

The LADO will provide advice and preside over the investigation of any allegation or suspicion of abuse directed against anyone working in the School. The discussion with the LADO will include the nature, content and context of the allegation. A course of action will be agreed with the LADO, including any involvement of the police. Any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child will be agreed with the LADO.

Advice will be sought from the LADO, Police and DSC to agree the following:

- Who needs to know and, importantly exactly what information can be shared;
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
- What, if any information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and

- How to manage press interest if it should arise.

All discussions, including those with the LADO will be recorded in writing and any communication with the individual and the parents of the child concerned will be agreed.

The School will not investigate allegations or undertake actions within an investigation before speaking to the LADO so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. If a crime may have been committed, the matter will be reported to the Police, and their advice followed.

The school has a duty of care towards its employees and as such it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. Individuals will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless external agencies object to this. The individual concerned will be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague, for support. S/he will also be given access to welfare counselling and medical advice.

If the police decide to take the case further and the allegation is against a member of staff, it is possible that he or she might be suspended or, where the circumstances are considered to warrant it, dismissed. Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation.

The School aims to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff from false or unfounded allegations. However, the School must consider the following when assessing its actions:

- Is the pupil at risk?
- Are other pupils at risk?
- Will the presence in School of the member of staff impede an investigation?

The School will always consider alternative arrangements that would achieve the same result as suspension of the member of staff. This could include either redeployment so that the member of staff does not have direct contact with the children concerned, or by providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the pupil concerned and the need for a full and fair investigation. The school will give due weight to the views of the LADO. A member of staff will only be suspended if there is no reasonable alternative. Further information on protocol is found in the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

### **3.6 Responding to allegations of concerns about former members of staff or volunteers**

Allegations against former members of staff or volunteers who are no longer working at the School, or concerns or suspicions about applicants for positions at the School should be referred to the Head Teacher. The Head will inform the LADO and/or the Police.

### **3.7 Responding to allegations or concerns about peer on peer abuse**



Staff at Sherborne Prep School recognise that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse, meaning that children may be harmed by other pupils. This is likely to include (but is not limited to):

- Bullying, including cyber bullying
- Gender based violence
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting
- Upskirting

Upskirting is a criminal offence – the offence of upskirting came into force in April 2019 and it important for staff to look out for it as an example of peer-on-peer abuse. Upskirting involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Perpetrators could face up to two years in prison if convicted.

The nature of the allegation or concern will determine whether staff should implement the School’s anti-bullying procedures or whether a referral needs to be made to social workers.

The School recognises its responsibility to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and ensures that:

- Information on the School’s Anti-bullying Policy is provided to parents and known to staff, as well as being available and known to the pupils themselves
- No ‘initiation’ ceremonies’ intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils are allowed, with all pupils and staff being made aware of the fact that such ceremonies are strictly and absolutely forbidden
- Assemblies, external speakers, PD (PSHEE) and training of older pupils promote the anti-bullying message
- Effective measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal effectively with bullying should it arise, in order that pupils feel safe and do not identify bullying as a problem in the school
- Pastoral care structures support staff preventing incidents of bullying
- Appropriate measures are in place to ensure that any pupil who is being bullied is suitably supported and that pupils who may bully others are given appropriate help, support and guidance
- All incidents will be taken seriously, parents/carers will be contacted and appropriate action taken

### **3.8 Children with special educational needs and who are disabled**

Research shows that children with special educational needs and who are disabled are especially vulnerable to abuse, and adults who work with them need to be vigilant and take extra care when interpreting apparent indicators of abuse or neglect. School staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer

- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves

Additional barriers can exist for adults who work with such children, in respect of recognising abuse and neglect. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEN and who are disabled can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers; and
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children, and the school should consider extra pastoral support

These child protection procedures will be followed if a child with special educational needs or who is disabled discloses abuse or there are indicators of abuse or neglect. There are no different or separate procedures for such children.

### 3.9 Anti-Bullying

Bullying is a subset of abuse that can take many forms which can be seen through physical, sexual harassment and sexual violence, emotional, verbal, ostracism, homophobic and gender related bullying (including cyber bullying). In addition, bullying may take the form of initiation or hazing type violence. Bullying will often involve more than one form. Sherborne Prep is determined that no type of bullying will be tolerated by staff, pupils or parents. Abuse is abuse and will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident (including cyber bullying) will be treated as a child protection concern where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm'. The School will refer to local agencies and take advice from the DSCB as to the appropriate action to take.

Further information is available in the School's Anti Bullying Policy and Protocol, and within the Behaviour Management Policy.

### 3.10 Early help

If it is agreed that a child would benefit from Early Help, the DSL will speak to the relevant agencies. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. The School listens to the voice of the child, puts its pupils at the centre of its care and recognises the importance of pupils receiving the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together and hence the DSL will provide support throughout the PDSCP early help assessment process. This process involves the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), the PDSCP Threshold tool and the Team around the Family Approach.

Early help will not be appropriate if a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm and/or may be immediate danger and in need of immediate protection.

All staff should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- Has special educational needs;
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour;
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems and domestic violence;
- Has returned home to their family from care;
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.

In addition to identifying emerging problems and liaising with the DSL to share information with other professionals so as to support early identification and assessment, staff may be asked, in some cases, to act as the lead professional in undertaking the early help assessment. The lead professional provides support to the child and family, acts as an advocate on their behalf and coordinates the delivery of support services. The lead professional role could be undertaken by a GP, family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions about who should be the lead professional will be taken on a case by case basis and will be informed by the child and their family.

For an early help assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents of carers. It should involve the child and the family as well as all the professionals who are working with them;
- A teacher, GP, health worker, early years' worker or other professional should be able to discuss concerns that may have about the child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local Authority Children's Social Care should set out a process for how this will happen; and
- If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, referral to the local authority Children's Social Care may be necessary.

The agreement of the child and their parents will be sought by the person in the school who has the closest working relationship with them; this might be the DSL, form tutor or boarding parent or another member of staff. Each case will be judged individually and the decision as to the most appropriate person to undertake this will be made by the DSL through consultation. If agreement is refused by the child and/or their parents or carers the advice of Children's Social Care will be sought by the DSL.

If early help is considered to be appropriate, the situation will be kept under constant review and a referral made to Children's Social Care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Further guidance can be found in Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2019).

## Section 4 – Types of Abuse

### 4.1 Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

NSPCC - UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects

Refuge: what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children

Safelives: young people and domestic abuse

### 4.2 Child criminal exploitation: county lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (National Crime Agency Human – Trafficking) should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

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

a range of other facts including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

### 4.3 Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief

The staff at Sherborne Prep promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Staff should strive to suspend professional disbelief (i.e. that it 'could not happen here') as some forms of abuse are linked to a lack of respect and tolerance. All staff should report promptly any concerns to the DSL who will seek further advice from statutory agencies where appropriate, prior to contacting parents/carers.

### 4.4 So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA)

So called honour-based abuse is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It can exist in all communities and cultures and occurs when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Females are predominantly, but not exclusively, the victims and the violence is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family or community members. HBA includes female genital mutilation and forced marriage; it is abuse and should be handled and escalated as such.

### 4.5 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal as it is a form of child abuse. It involves intentionally altering or injuring female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It can have serious and long-lasting implications for physical health and emotional well-being. There is a range of possible indicators, including taking the girl out of school/country for a prolonged period or talk of a 'special procedure' or celebration, which individually may not indicate risk but if two or more indicators are present this could signal a risk. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM, such as Somali, Kenyan, Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Egyptian, Nigerian, Eritrean, Yemeni, Kurdish and Indonesian communities.

If any member of staff has a concern about a girl they are teaching, the local safeguarding procedures must be activated. Evidence of FGM may come from disclosure or from visual evidence. Such evidence must not come from an individual examining the girl. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 placed a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals. **In addition to reporting concerns to the DSL, teachers along with regulated health professionals have a statutory duty to report personally to the Police if they discover that FGM has or appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.** Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

In cases where a teacher merely suspects that an act of FGM may have been carried out or that a girl may be at risk of FGM and in cases relating to girls aged 18 and over, teachers should discuss their concerns with the DSL who will follow the School's normal safeguarding procedures and involve Children's Social Care as appropriate.

## 4.6 Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is illegal and occurs when one or both people do not or, in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot consent to marriage, and pressure or abuse is used. It is not the same as arranged marriage.

## 4.7 Preventing radicalisation

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

Extremism is defined by HM Government as 'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

In this school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to share their views and to understand that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

We recognise that children with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our pupils with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

Children are taught about how to stay safe when using the Internet and are encouraged to recognise that people are not always who they say they are online. They are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the Internet.

Any concerns about pupils becoming radicalised or being drawn into extremism will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will *not* speak to parents/carers or other family members at this stage, but will take prompt advice from the Police by e-mailing the Safeguarding Referral Unit: [sru@dorset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:sru@dorset.pnn.police.uk).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is also the Prevent Lead with the Deputy DSL responsible for staff training.

Dorset has a Channel Panel in place, in accordance with its duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This is a multi-agency meeting which discusses individuals who have been referred by the Police as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Where pupils at this school are being discussed, the DSL or Head Teacher will attend the Panel meetings.

Staff and governors in this school have attended a WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) session or have completed on-line Prevent training. The school also maintains a regularly updated Prevent risk assessment that is shared with all staff working at the school. All new staff are required to complete online training.

## 4.8 Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. There is government guidance on this: <https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/>

## 4.9 Family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

## 4.10 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into Children's Social Care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

## 4.11 Online safety

The school recognises its responsibility to do all that it reasonably can to limit:

- Inappropriate online content
- Contact that could be harmful online
- Inappropriate personal conduct

The school uses a firewall that filters effectively and maintains a log of any concerns which are dealt with sensitively by the DSL or Head of ICT where appropriate. The school has an Internet and Acceptable Use Policy which the Head of ICT is responsible for writing and monitoring.

## Section 5 – Roles, responsibilities and training

## 5.1 Safer Working Practice

All adults who come into contact with children at this school will behave at all times in a professional manner which secures the best outcomes for children and also prevents allegations being made. Detailed advice on safer working practice can be found in the School's Code of Conduct.

We promote a culture whereby members of the school community should feel able to raise with the Head Teacher, or any member of the leadership team, any concerns about staff conduct. If the reporter feels that the issue has not been addressed they should contact someone outside of the school, such as the Chair of Governors or the LADO. (See Appendix 2 for contact number.)

Staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and in accordance with the School's Intimate Care Policy.

In the EYFS registered setting, Ofsted will be informed of any allegations against people living or working at the premises, or of any other abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises as soon as is practicable and within 14 days at latest.

Sherborne Prep is an open campus. Staff are educated in challenging unknown visitors and children are taught to direct all visitors if they come across them to the school office. All visitors are required to sign in and out of school and wear a visitor badge at all times.

## 5.2 Training

Child protection is part of induction for all staff and regular volunteers new to the school. They are given a copy of this policy, the Code of Conduct, details about the role of the DSL and part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: information for all school and college staff' plus Annex A if they work directly with children.

This is followed up by basic child protection training that equips individuals to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns about pupils.

A proportional risk-based approach will be taken regarding the level of information provided to all temporary staff and volunteers. As a minimum they are provided with, and are expected to follow, the child protection summary sheet which forms part of this policy.

Staff who do not have designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including the Head Teacher, undertake suitable refresher training at appropriate intervals. The DSCB recommends this is at least every three years. The governor responsible for safeguarding attends appropriate safeguarding training and all governors go through training with the DSL focusing on KCSiE part 2 every two years. Governors are expected to sign a safeguarding contract every year.

All staff have training in preventing radicalisation and extremism ('Prevent') – either by attending a Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) or completing an on-line course, followed by a discussion with the DSL. The DSL is the Prevent Lead and attends WRAP.



In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates from the DSL as required, but at least annually. This includes learning from local and national serious cases when the learning becomes available.

When DSLs and Deputies take up the role they attend enhanced (Level 3) training – provided through the DSCB multi-agency course. They must be updated at 2 yearly intervals after that.

In addition, their knowledge and skills are updated regularly - at least annually. These individuals are expected to take responsibility for their own learning about safeguarding and child protection by, for example: taking time to read and digest newsletters and relevant research articles; attending training offered by DSCB on matters such as domestic abuse, attachment and child sexual exploitation; completing on-line training on FGM; attending local DSL forums etc.

Designated Teachers for Looked-After Children (mandatory for maintained schools and academies; good practice in independent schools which have or likely to have Looked-After Children) undertake appropriate training. In Dorset this is provided by the Virtual School for Children in Care.

See Appendix 2 for contact details.

The Head Teacher, the Deputy Heads and at least one governor complete safer recruitment training (mandatory in maintained schools; best practice in others) either through a multi-agency taught session or by completing the NSPCC on-line course.

It is recommended by the DSCB that all governors attend training, briefings or other input which equips them to understand fully and comply with their legal safeguarding duties *as governors*, set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2020. Attendance includes those who also work with children and have attended child protection training in that role.

### **5.3 Raising concerns about safeguarding practice in our school**

In this school we promote a culture where any staff or volunteers feel able to raise with the Head Teacher any concerns about safeguarding or child protection practice.

Any issues which they have not been able to resolve with the Head Teacher should be reported to the governors in the first instance. If they are still not satisfied they should approach the Director for Children's Services or, if the issue relates to the conduct of or allegation against a member of staff, should contact the local designated officer (also known as the LADO).

Staff should refer to the School's Whistle-Blowing Policy for more information or can use the NSPCC whistle blowing helpline: 0800 0280285.

### **5.4 Information for parents and carers**

At this school we are committed to keeping our pupils safe. Our first priority is the child's welfare and we will usually discuss with parent any concerns we have about the child. There might be rare occasions, however, when we have to provide information to or consult other agencies such as Children's Social Care before we contact a parent/parents. This will include situations where we judge that to tell the parent(s) first will or might put the child at risk of significant harm.

Our responsibilities are set out in this policy. It reflects statutory guidance and the Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures, which can be found on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website.

If parents have any questions about this they need to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead:  
**Annie Gent**

## 5.5 Visiting, ancillary and unchecked staff

All visitors are required to enter Sherborne Prep School through the main door regardless of time of arrival. There is a buzzer for 'out of hours' which alert staff to the presence of a visitor. There is a door release button in the foyer for use after school hours. Visitors should only be let in if staff are comfortable that the visitor is here for legitimate purposes. Staff should be completely satisfied before letting visitors into school and should ensure that they are accompanied when entering school. Staff should be aware of all visitors to the school and to the possibility that young people are vulnerable to abuse by visitors or that inappropriate items could be handed over to them.

Staff are therefore required to establish the name and purpose of all visitors to the School. Proof of identity will be requested where visitors are unknown to staff. Official ID cards must always be checked for visitors from Agencies or Authorities. The process is:

- a. All visitors are required to be 'signed in' at reception using the Visitors Book/Fire Register system. Visitors should complete the self-carbonating slip stating their name, their company, who they are visiting, their vehicle registration and the date/time. Staff will tear off the slip and place it on a badge which the visitor should wear whilst on site. If the visitor is about to undertake any work, they must complete the form at Annex B. When the visit has ended the visitor must return their pass to the School Office and the office staff will sign the visitor out including the time they left.
- b. Any 'unchecked' staff, for example repair or maintenance contractors and ancillary staff will be supervised and not left alone with children. They should be given clear instruction as what to do if an unsupervised child or children enters the area where they are working. They must also be told about the importance of ensuring the security of any tools, equipment or substances they are using. They must also be informed what to do in the event of a fire alarm.

**Inappropriate visitors.** If a person arrives at the School apparently under the influence of alcohol or substances, or displaying threatening or potentially disruptive behaviour, staff should deny admission. The Head Teacher or Bursar should be contacted as soon as practicable. The Police should be informed if the situation becomes threatening. In these circumstances the matter must be referred to a member of the Senior Management Team.

The HR department hold a record of all checks on visiting staff and speakers, and communicate this to the DSL.

*Annex B details the document given to all supply/peripatetic/ temporary staff who will be working unsupervised with children, even if just for part of a day*

## 5.6 Staff/Pupil/Former Pupil Contact

As a general rule, staff should avoid unnecessary contact with pupils outside school.

- They should not give pupils their home address, mobile or home phone number, or non-school e-mail address without very good cause. If there is a requirement to do this, the member of staff must inform the DSL. Letters including thank you letters to pupils must not contain these personal details. They should not make arrangements to meet pupils, individually or in groups, outside school other than authorised situations.
- They should avoid contacting pupils at home unless this is strictly necessary; they must keep a record on iSAMS of any such occasion.
- They must not give a pupil a lift in their own vehicle other than on school business and with permission from the Head Teacher and parent.
- They are advised not to attend private pupil parties, and should be aware of their professional standing and responsibilities when attending parties arranged by parents at which pupils are also present.
- Staff should not purchase gifts or sweets for children. A small token at the end of a term is acceptable.
- Staff and children must not follow each other or be friends on social media.

Members of staff who are parents of pupils, friends with parents of pupils or who live locally will of course see pupils outside school. However, they should still use their professional judgement to respect the spirit of the Staff Code of Conduct.

## 5.7 Language

Staff should not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of pupils. They should not use language which is discriminatory and demeaning in relation to physical appearance, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or age. Staff should not make sexual innuendos or any comments of a sexual nature other than in the context of the curriculum as specified in planning.

## 5.8 Physical Contact

In nearly all cases, physical contact between pupils and staff is inappropriate. The only possible circumstances where physical contact may occur are outlined in the school Contact Policy, Use of Reasonable Force to Control, Intervene or Restrain Policy, Intimate Care Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

## 5.9 Isolation

If a teacher is alone with a pupil s/he should ensure that any such meeting is as visible as possible. As such s/he should ensure that the door to the room has a glass panel or is left open. If this is not possible then another adult must be present.

## **5.10 Relationships**

We best serve the pupils in our care by a pastoral approach that is concerned, collective and thorough, but professionally detached. We do not serve pupils or parents well by encouraging situations in which pupils develop excessive reliance on individual teachers. All teachers, tutors, peripatetic music staff, Saturday Activity staff, sports coaches etc. must be aware of policy guidance on these matters as they have a relationship of trust with all pupils by virtue of their position and the work they undertake. More detail is available in this Safeguarding Policy.

## **5.11 Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Staff must respect the privacy of pupils, parents and colleagues and must not pass or share information unless it is a child protection issue and the child is at risk of harm. In these instances the DSL must be informed. Enquirers should put the request in writing so that it can be dealt with appropriately. See the school Data Protection Policy and Freedom of Information for more information.

## **5.12 Comments and Discussions with Pupils**

Staff must avoid comments to or about pupils which could be taken to have inappropriate overtones. In order to discharge particular pastoral responsibilities, staff may from time to time need to engage in conversation with pupils which cover sensitive matters. Teachers must use their professional judgement to ensure that they are not drawn into areas inappropriate to their professionalism and use their discretion. The use of hurtful, sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments can also be regarded as very damaging and a form of abuse which must be avoided. In particular staff must not make any racist, sexist or homophobic comments. Specific guidance is available through the induction process to assist staff, newly qualified teachers and Gap students through discussion with the DSL, Deputy Head and in the online staff handbook. Further guidance is available in the Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policies.

## **5.13 Out of School and After School Activities**

Staff must take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential trip, Saturday morning, Boarding or After-school activity. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff are no different from those which apply within school.

## **5.14 Reporting Incidents**

Teachers must report any concerns they may have following any incident where s/he feels that her/his actions may have been misinterpreted. This report must be made to the Deputy Head as soon as possible after the incident and should include a report on iSAMS, a copy of which must be forwarded to the Deputy Head.

## **5.15 Communication and Social Media**

Staff should usually only write letters or send emails to individual pupils about academic matters. For specific guidance concerning social media, please refer to the Internet and Acceptable Use and Social Media policies.

## 5.16 Alcohol

On the occasion that teachers are socialising, it is important that professional standards are maintained. Teachers must maintain the highest professional standards at school social events and must not drink alcohol on school premises unless at an approved School function. Staff must be mindful of the laws of driving after drinking alcohol within 24 hours.

## 5.17 Changing Rooms

See Safeguarding and Staff Induction, Training and Professional Development Programme Policy for further information.

## 5.18 Boarding area access

See 'Access to the Premises by People Outside the School' Policy

## 5.19 Sherborne Prep Staff Dress Code

In order to undertake our professional duties, teachers and staff should adhere to a dress code that gives the staff credence and respect and does not distract from the person. Pupils tend to model the behaviour and appearance they see in the classroom and about the school and it is important that we present good and tidy role models to them. Staff must dress in such a way as to present appropriately and sensibly to parents and pupils and to ensure that we present professionally to all members of the school community.

An effective member of staff will dress appropriately as a professional to model the expectations we have of our children. Staff should strive to be a positive role model for each student. Making a good impression upon parents will help to foster a productive relationship to help the pupils to excel in the classroom. By following the dress code policy, it is expected that the staff member will provide an appropriate role model to young children.

Staff are expected to dress in smart formal wear during the *working week*:

- A suit or jacket and smart trousers and a shirt and tie for men
- A dress or smart skirt/trousers for women that should be appropriate and comfortable. Denim is not acceptable
- Clean, smart, suitably heeled, closed footwear or smart sandals that are appropriate and safe for walking around the school site

Or

- An agreed 'uniform' for the area of the school that they work in e.g. non-teaching staff, PE staff (especially noting the need for non-intrusive jewellery)

*Saturdays:*

The staff may 'dress down' although there should be no ripped denim or spaghetti strapped tops. Clothes should remain smart and appropriate.

*Trips:*

Staff may wear a 'dressed down' attire on trips but remain aware that they are on show as much as the children are. Clothes should be smart and appropriate.

The School would expect:

- Fashion accessories to be minimal
- Make up to be subtle
- Hair colour to be natural subtle shades
- No visible tattoos
- No facial piercings
- Only discreet earrings

## 5.20 Whistle blowing (to be read in conjunction with Staff Disciplinary, Grievance and Whistle Blowing Policy)

**Whistle blowing.** Sherborne Prep School seeks to conduct its business honestly and with integrity at all times. However, we acknowledge that all organisations face the risk of their activities going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring malpractice. We believe we have a duty to take appropriate measures to identify such situations and attempt to remedy them. By encouraging a culture of openness and accountability within the school, we believe that we can help prevent such situations occurring. We expect all staff to maintain high standards in accordance with our code of conduct and to report any wrongdoing that falls short of these fundamental principles. It is the responsibility of all employees to raise any concerns that they might have about malpractice within the school. The aim of this policy is to ensure that our employees are confident that they can raise any matters of genuine concern without fear of reprisals, in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and that the matters will be investigated appropriately and regarded as confidential. Full guidance is found in the specific Whistle Blowing Policy.

The Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures should be used when there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children, in connection with his/her employment or voluntary activity, has:

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

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people.

If a member of staff feels uncomfortable about contacting the above they are able to contact the LADO - **Patrick Crawford 01305 221122** to gain advice.

## 5.21 Safer Recruitment

There is a full policy on recruitment within Sherborne Prep. At Sherborne Prep all members of staff must have two references. One of these must, wherever possible, be a current employer. In the case of people returning to work after a break in employment – a reference should be obtained from their most recent previous employer. The school reserves the right to request further references if there are any queries regarding the references supplied.

**References.** Reference requests will be in two standard formats:

- a. Request for *candidates having previously worked with children*, which asks specific questions regarding disciplinary procedures concerning the applicant, disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving issues relating to the safety and welfare of children, and outcome of concerns. Referees will also be asked whether they are satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children – if not, they will be asked to give reasons why not.
- b. Requests for *candidates not having previously worked with children* will be less detailed than the above.

**Educational and professional qualifications.** Candidates will be reminded in the invitation to interview letter to bring with them educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post. Documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements will also be required. Evidence of permission to work (for any member of staff who is not a National of the European Economic Area (EEA)) will also be requested, as will evidence of checks provided by another country for an applicant who has worked abroad (if applicable).

**Interviews.** The following direction is to be complied with: The interview panel will meet before the interviews and reach a consensus about the required standard for the job for which they are appointing. Although a list of questions may not be agreed, they will consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those. They will also agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification. The interview panel will consist of a minimum of two interviewers, one of whom has undertaken safer recruitment training. The members of the panel will have the necessary authority to make decisions about the appointment. An interview checklist will be completed for each applicant.

**Safer recruiting course.** At least one member of the interview panel must have attended a safer recruiting course. The Head Teacher and both Deputy Heads are trained in Safer Recruitment as is a member of the HR department.

On receipt, references will be scrutinised, checked against the application form and personnel will verify, by telephone, the content of the reference.

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- a. Receipt of two satisfactory references (if not received before interview)
- b. Verification of references
- c. Satisfactory receipt of DBS clearance
- d. Check of DfES Barred List/Prohibition list check/and management for those in management positions.
- e. Verification of medical fitness

## **Section 6 - Information about the management of safeguarding and the appointment of the designated person**

**6.1** There is one DSL that presides over the school. This is currently Annie Gent who is part of the Senior Leadership Team- Deputy Head Pastoral. There are two deputy DSLs for the Prep – Alastair Poulain and Andrew Treavett. In Pre-Prep the Head of Pre-Prep and the head of EYFS are deputies. All of these staff are trained through Dorset LSCB to Level 3 and updated every two years. The Head Teacher, Director of Boarding and a senior member of the boarding team are also trained to Level 3 status. The governor designated to Safeguarding will be trained to Level 3.

**6.2** The specific role of the DSL is to safeguard the children’s wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession; Provide a safe environment in which the children can learn; Identify children who may be in need of extra support or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm; and to support the Head Teacher in ensuring that new employees and volunteers (where appropriate) attend the relevant child safeguarding training and are appropriately inducted to the School.

This role will also include:

- delivering safeguarding inset training each year to all staff
- ensuring all staff are fully qualified and maintain a clear register of who is qualified to what level and book staff on to relevant courses
- ensuring the school is fully compliant with regards to Safeguarding and Child Protection including writing and updating the suite of policies each year
- working with external agencies and Social services for children who are considered vulnerable.
- maintaining up to date and detailed Child Protection records
- being fully aware of the legality of parental access and inform staff of the school’s responsibilities.
- delivering full induction to all new staff
- attending Dorset forums for Safeguarding excellence
- working with the Head of ICT in delivery of parent and staff insets on E-safety safety (annually) and to support the writing of the Internet and Acceptable use of technology (including mobile phones), social media, and photography and recording and mobile device policies
- liaising with previous and future schools on Child Protection matters

**6.3** The Deputy DSL’s Roles are:

Safeguard the children’s wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession. Provide a safe environment in which the children can learn. Identify children who may be in need of extra support or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Promptly raise any concerns to the School’s Designated Safeguarding Lead and work with other services as needed. This role will include:

- organising external PREVENT Safeguarding inset training to all staff and updating staff on PREVENT annually
- delivering PREVENT training to volunteer staff and staff who are unable to attend external training
- keeping an up to date and comprehensive register of PREVENT training in the school
- liaising with the Bursar and DSL on the PREVENT Risk Assessment.
- assisting the DSL to ensure the school is fully compliant with regards to Safeguarding and Child Protection including proof reading the suite of policies each year.



- working with, when required external agencies and Social Services for children who are considered vulnerable
- maintaining up to date and detailed Child Protection records in the absence of the DSL
- being fully aware of the legality of parental access
- working with the DSL and Head of ICT in the delivery of parent and staff insets on On-line safety, and to proof read the Internet and Acceptable use of technology (including mobile phones), social media, and photography and recording and mobile device policies
- taking regular minutes of weekly Pastoral Care meetings and termly Governor Meetings with a 24-hour turnaround
- contacting previous schools regarding Child Protection files when a child joins the school. liaising with The Head of Boarding and DSL on building the relationship with guardian agencies and host families, and where appropriate,
- chairing pastoral meetings with parents.

#### **6.4 Training of the DSL, Deputies and staff including governors**

Sherborne prep has a DSL who is part of the Senior Leadership team. The DSL is supported by 4 deputies, one of which oversees EYFS. All of these staff are trained through Dorset LSCB to level 3 and updated every two years. The Head Teacher, Director of Boarding and a senior member of the boarding team are also trained to level 3 status. The governor designated to Safeguarding will be trained to Level 3.

All staff have at least yearly safeguarding updates and a more formalised training session every two years.

All staff complete online Prevent training and have or will attend Prevent sessions.

All staff including governors are expected to sign a safeguarding contract every year stating that they have read and understood policies, updates and government guidance.

The governors have training provided by the DSL and the Governor designated to safeguarding has undertaken a course in Safeguarding governance through AGBIS.

#### **6.5 Arrangements for reviewing policies**

The Safeguarding suite of policies is reviewed at least annually. The Child Protection Policy is reviewed and ratified by the Governing committee during their first meeting of the academic year in November.

The Assistant Head Pastoral, Deputy Head and Head Teacher take the lead on the suite of Safeguarding policies.

## **Section 7 - The school's arrangements for fulfilling other safeguarding and welfare responsibilities**

### **7.1 Gender-Based Violence**

Gender-based violence is a significant problem in the UK. Domestic and sexual violence is often hidden and victims suffer in silence. Sherborne Prep is committed to using education to prevent violence against women and girls, and gender-based violence generally.

### **7.2 Serious Violence**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Further guidance can be found in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

### **7.3 Gangs and Youth Violence**

We are aware of the sorts of issues that young people might experience as they grow up. Our robust anti-bullying policy and early intervention in PSHEE and tutorials provides pupils with a resilience to such issues.

### **7.4 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and

- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Although the age of SPS children is below the age of consent in the majority of cases, the school recognises and understands the importance of being aware of sexual violence and harassment, and would respond appropriately.

## Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent?

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

## Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - sexualised online bullying;
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

### **The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by disclosing.

Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. If staff have a concern about a child, or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out from paragraph 22 in Part one of the guidance KCSiE 2020. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

## **8: COVID 19**

As the **children return to school** having spent several weeks and in some cases months at home, it is likely that:

- Some will have **anxieties** that will cause them to be **distressed** at being back at school
- Some are likely and a growing number more likely to have **mental health concerns**
- Children are likely to have had significant changes in their **routine** and will struggle to adjust back to being at school
- Some have had **access to materials on-line** that are either age **inappropriate** or possibly have been exposed to other adults who wish to groom children for **exploitive** and/or **abusive** purposes
- Some **children** will have **suffered abuse** from the adults in their house
- Some children will have **witnessed domestic abuse and violence** or have been abusive to their parents/carers or siblings (**peer on peer abuse**)
- Some children will have experienced abuse (online, physical, emotional, sexual) from their siblings or their peers

Peer on peer abuse online will manifest as possible **behaviour concerns**

### **8.1 Staff awareness of the situation and support measures**

Sherborne Prep School staff are aware of the unprecedented situation families will have found themselves in and aim to support the children and their families as the community physically comes together again. The pastoral team lead by the DSL are available to children and their families to talk through any anxieties or concerns and we will follow the same protocol should a disclosure be made by a child or if a family seeks help to manage a situation that has arisen during the Covid 19 lockdown period. The DSL is available to staff who feel that they need additional support.

**International pupils and boarders:** The staff are mindful that there are children who have had myriad experiences as they have resided in different countries. The pastoral team will work closely with the boarding team to support all boarding children and their families.

The form teachers will have regular contact with all families within their forms although this will be through email/Teams in the interim. Where necessary the pastoral team will support the form teachers and will contact families.

**Logging concerns:** It is now more important than ever that concerns are logged appropriately through the iSAMs database. It is an expectation that all staff will use this system properly and fully ensuring

all incidents and concerns are logged. Any comments must be kept factual and follow ups must also be included by the relevant member of staff. Staff are reminded that these notes are subject to GDPR regulations and there must never be any personal conjecture or commentary in the logs uploaded.

## **8.2 adapting the system to care for children**

The PD scheme of work has been adapted for 2020 so that pupil wellbeing and emotional wellness is at the forefront of the sessions. The DSL will support all the PD teachers in how best to deliver the curriculum and will seek advice from external agencies and experts in mindfulness and wellbeing where necessary and the curriculum will be adapted to cater for the needs of the children. The DSL will be available for any children who would like to talk as will any member of staff. The child must be able to talk with the member of staff they feel most comfortable with.

## **8.3 teaching at reach safeguarding guidelines and advice**

1. This guidance document is supported by the full Safeguarding policy in place at Sherborne Prep School
2. The usage of video teaching is governed by the School code of conduct policy for all members of our community.
3. By bringing staff instruction into the home, the lessons can feel different. The same rules of communication apply as if this were a lesson taught in the usual manner.
4. All video lesson times must be agreed with the parents of the child so that the parent is fully aware of when the lesson will take place.
5. Peripatetic and hourly paid teachers must produce a time sheet of when they provide a video lesson that is given to their line managers in accordance with the financial policy.
6. All lessons that are provided by video conferencing must be recorded through the Microsoft Teams recording function.
7. Staff members must adhere to the Saturday morning staff dress code when undertaking a video lesson.
8. Children must be appropriately dressed when undertaking a video lesson with a member of staff. In the event that the teacher feels that this is not the case, the video lesson will be terminated immediately, and a report logged on iSAMS with the details of the concern.
9. Any concern during a video lesson must be raised to the DSL as soon as is possible (an email will suffice) as stated in the full Child Protection policy. The DSL will follow protocol where there is a safeguarding concern.
10. All staff are expected to adhere to the safeguarding and child protection guidelines as set out in the full Safeguarding suite of policies. Furloughed staff must not contact pupils. If there are any concerns or queries the member of staff must contact the DSL with the information. The DSL remains contactable at any point and will continue to oversee the pastoral care throughout the school. In the

event of DSL illness staff are expected to contact one of the 3 Deputy DSLs (ap@ for years 6-8, apt@ for years 3-5, hb@ for PrePrep).

**WELLBEING** Children will still require pastoral support while receiving teaching at reach. Guidance has been put in place for the children to maintain a healthy and balanced day (see below). In addition children have the opportunity to have live video conversations with their form tutors 5 days a week and pupils will have a timetable with a number of live sessions throughout each week day- number dependent on each year group.

Concerns about a child's welfare should be logged on iSAMS as is the usual procedure and the pastoral team will liaise with staff on how best to care for an individual. Parents may require a level of wellbeing support as they navigate home learning with their pupils. They will need to feel listened to by staff and if a member of staff feels it would be of benefit they should direct the parent to the Deputy Head Pastoral.

Staff wellbeing is important and staff should contact one of the Deputy Heads or the Director of CoCurricular and Operations in the first instance should they need support. Any concerns or worries will be dealt with sensitively and confidentially. The Independent Listener Rev Katie Windle is available to talk with staff and children although requests where possible need to go through the Deputy Head Pastoral.

### **Keep Well**

- Keep active
- Keep healthy - eat well and stay hydrated
- Wash your hands regularly
- Stay safe and stay at home
- Look after your family - be kind
- Enjoy your relaxation time
- Take on this new challenge and enjoy it
- Keep connected and ask for help if needed
- Be kind and helpful Work Hard
- Try and work to a routine
- Be organised and ready to work hard
- Have a positive approach to this school work
- Sit on a chair at a table if you can
- Read or listen to instructions very carefully
- If you have tried hard, don't worry if you haven't finished
- Read for enjoyment
- Take breaks away from the screen
- Look at your Calendars on Teams
- Join form times and talk with teachers when you can - Form time is every day

## ANNEX A

### The 7 golden rules to sharing information (Information sharing: Advice for practitioners)

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2019 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2019 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see Section 1.2).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

## ANNEX B

### Child Protection Summary for all Visiting Professionals

As an adult working directly with children in this school you have a duty of care towards all pupils. This means you must act at all times in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare. It is your responsibility to keep your child protection training up to date; you might be asked for evidence of this.

You must follow the principles of safer working practice, which include use of technology – on no account should you contact or take images of pupils on personal equipment, including your mobile phone. In EYFS, staff keep their devices locked away from the children. Staff only use a school device to record images of children.

If the behaviour of another adult in the school gives rise to concern, you must report it to the Head Teacher.

If you have a concern about a child, particularly if you think s/he may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, it is your responsibility to share the information promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy/ies who are *Annie Gent, Alastair Poulain, Andrew Treavett, Rebecca Horlock and Heidi Berry*.

The following is not an exhaustive list but you might become concerned as a result of:

- Seeing a physical injury which you believe to be non-accidental
- Observing something in the appearance of a pupil which leads you to think his/her needs are being neglected
- A pupil telling you that s/he has been subjected to some form of abuse

In any of these circumstances you must write down what you observed or heard, date and sign the account and give it to the DSL or a Deputy.

If a pupil talks to you about (discloses) sexual or physical abuse you must:

- Listen carefully without interruption, particularly if s/he is freely recalling significant events
- Only ask sufficient questions to clarify what you have heard. You might not need to ask anything but, if you do, you must not 'lead' the pupil in any way so should only ask 'open' questions
- Make it clear you are obliged to pass the information on, but only to those who need to know
- Tell the DSL or Deputy without delay
- Write an account of the disclosure as soon as you are able (definitely the same day), date and sign it and give it to the DSL.

Do not ask the pupil to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school, ask him/her or any other pupil to write a 'statement', or inform parents. You are not expected to make a judgement about whether the child is telling the truth.

Remember – share any concerns, don't keep them to yourself.

*I confirm I have read and understood my responsibility and the key procedures at Sherborne Prep School*

PRINT NAME ..... SIGN ..... DATE .....



## ANNEX C

### CONCERN FORM - for use when a child's well-being is in question

Name of child:	Date of concern:
Name of Reporting person:	Name of who the report is passed to:

Details of concern:
SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON AND FULL DATE:

Details of action taken and outcome
SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON AND FULL DATE:

## Appendix 1

### Responding to Concerns Summary

- **Stop and listen**  
(if it is not convenient to do so immediately, let the pupil know when they can talk to you)
- **Do not agree to talk in confidence**
- **Take seriously what the pupil tells you**
- **Avoid asking leading questions**
- **Write down what is said**  
(please do so as soon as possible after the conversation and not in front of the pupil)
- **Report the conversation to somebody who can help**
- **Avoid suggesting ways of dealing with the problem**  
(listen and offer to find out a possible way forward from somebody who can help)
- **Do not keep the information to yourself that might prove critical**
- **If you overhear conversations that concern you, pass on the information**

Please always remember...

Don't think – 'what if I am wrong?'

Think – 'What if I am right?'

When in doubt, seek help or reassurance from one of the School's DSLs:

- Annie Gent
- Alastair Poulain
- Andrew Treavett
- Heidi Berry
- Rebecca Horlock (EYFS)

## Appendix 2

### Useful Contacts

#### 1) For NEW referrals (concerns about children, which require a social work assessment):

##### **Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership**

<https://pdscp.co.uk>

WEST TEAM:

County Hall

Colliton Park

Dorchester

Dorset

DT1 1XJ

**Tel:** 01305 221196

**Email:** [pan-dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:pan-dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

EAST TEAM:

Bournemouth Learning Centre

Ensbury Avenue

Bournemouth

Dorset

BH10 4HG

**Tel:** 01202 458873

**Email:** [pandorsetsafeguardingchildrenpartnership@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:pandorsetsafeguardingchildrenpartnership@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Managing a report:

<https://pdscp.co.uk/working-with-children/schools-and-colleges/dorset/>

<https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/>

**Children’s advice and duty services: Single points of contacts for concerns and professional concerns:**

[01305228866](tel:01305228866)  
[01305228558](tel:01305228558)

**East District children’s Social Care Team:**

[01202868224](tel:01202868224)  
[eastdistrictchildcare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:eastdistrictchildcare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**West District children’s Social Care Team:**

[01305 221450](tel:01305221450)  
[westdistrictchildcare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:westdistrictchildcare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**Dorset Safeguarding and Standards Team**

**LADO - Patrick Crawford** 01305 221122

The team comprises Children’s Services managers and advisors including:

- The Education Safeguarding Standards Advisor who offers advice and support to Head Teachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO) to whom allegations against adults who work with children in education establishments must be reported
- The Children’s Services ‘Prevent’ Lead

**5) Dorset Virtual School for children who are in care/ Looked After**

01305 228307

**6) Dorset Governor Services (for governor safeguarding training)**

01305 224382

**7) Somerset Children’s Social Care - 0300 123 2224**

Emergency Duty team for out of office hours - 0300 123 23 27

Email: [childrens@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:childrens@somerset.gov.uk)

**8) Wiltshire Children’s Social Care - 0300 456 0108, out of hours: 0845 6070 888**

**9) Dorset CAMHs**

<https://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services-hospitals/mental-health/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-camhs>

01305 255705

01258 394149

**10) Somerset CAMHs**

<http://www.sompar.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-and-young-people/>

## Appendix 3

### Possible Indicators of Abuse

The following information is not designed to turn school staff into experts but it will help them to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse. The examples below are not meant to form an exhaustive list; Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff will find it helpful to refer to Government advice 'What to do if you are worried about a child being abused' (2015) and the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the PDSCP website.

#### i) Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of the body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which is less likely to have been caused accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or there are differing explanations. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different ethnic groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse can include:

- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape
- bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks, fingertips or a belt buckle

Although bruising is the most common injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness must be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse can include:

- cigarette burns
- adult bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- missing school

- running away from home

## ii) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear otherwise well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. *Children who live in households where there is domestic violence often suffer emotional abuse.* Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse can include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from parents' care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour, e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self-harm
- fear of parents being approached

## iii) Sexual Abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. It is important to remember that children can also be sexually abused by other children (i.e. those under 18)

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause concern, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to, taken seriously and appropriate action taken promptly.

The physical signs of sexual abuse can include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse can include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares

- missing school
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- alcohol / substance / drug use
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults or other children

#### iv) Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect can include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect can include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

It is important that adults in school recognise that providing compensatory care might address the immediate and presenting issue but could cover up or inhibit the recognition of neglect in all aspects of a child's life. Compensatory care is defined as 'providing a child or young person, on a regular basis, help or assistance with basic needs with the aim of redressing deficits in parental care'. This might involve, for example, providing each day a substitute set of clothing because those from home are dirty, or showering a child whose personal hygiene or presentation is such that it is affecting his/her interaction with peers. It does not include isolated or irregular support such as giving lunch money or washing a child who has had an 'accident'. If any adult in school finds s/he is regularly attending to one or more aspects of a child's basic needs then this will prompt a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The general rule is: the younger the child, the higher the risk in terms of their immediate health. However, serious neglect of older children and adolescents is often overlooked, on the assumption that they have the ability to care for themselves and have made a 'choice' to neglect themselves. Lack of engagement with services should be seen as a potential indicator of neglect.

School staff should be mindful of the above and discuss any concerns with the DSL who will take the appropriate action in accordance with the inter-agency neglect guidance on the PDSCP website.



**Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. There is government guidance on this:

<https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/>

**Family members in prison**

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

**Child criminal exploitation: County lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs, and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Further guidance on handling case of CCE can be found in Annex A KCSiE 2020

## Appendix 4

### Record Keeping: Best Practice

#### To be read and followed by all DSLs and Deputies

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The importance of good, clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has been highlighted repeatedly in national and local Serious Case Reviews.
- 1.2. It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility to ensure that child protection files, access, storage and transfer meet the required professional standards as detailed in this document.
- 1.3. The common law of Confidentiality, Data Protection and Human Rights principles must be adhered to when obtaining, processing or sharing personal or sensitive information or records. In summary, the Data Protection Act requires that records should be securely kept, accurate, relevant, up to date and kept for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which they were made.
- 1.4. Any electronic record keeping system should comply with the general standards set out below. (The 'My Concern' system in use in many local schools has been checked for compliance.)

#### 2. Record to be made by an adult receiving a disclosure of abuse (when a child talks about abuse)

- 2.1. This record should be made as soon as possible **after** the individual hearing the disclosure has reported it verbally to the DSL. The facts, not opinions (unless of particular relevance), should be accurately recorded in a non-judgemental way. It is important to remember that expressing an opinion as to whether the child is telling the truth is not helpful and can prejudice how a case proceeds.
- 2.2. The record should ideally be on a standard 'concerns' form (Local Authority model available from the Safeguarding and Standards Team or on Nexus) but if this is not used, should include:
  - a) The child's name, gender and date of birth
  - b) Date and time of the conversation
  - c) What was the context and who was present during the disclosure?
  - d) What did the child say? – verbatim if possible
  - e) What questions were asked? – verbatim
  - f) Responses to questions – verbatim

- g) Any observations concerning child's demeanour and any injuries
- h) The name of the person to whom the disclosure was reported
- i) Printed name and job title of the author, followed by signature and date

2.3. The record about a disclosure of abuse should be passed to the DSL and retained in the pupil's Child Protection File in its original and contemporaneous form (as it could be used as evidence in court proceedings), even if later typed or if the information is incorporated into a report.

2.4. Schools should never ask pupils, regardless of their involvement in a child protection matter (i.e. the subject of an allegation, a witness or the alleged 'perpetrator'), to write out their 'statements' of what has happened. In some cases, this could have the unintended consequence of jeopardising a child protection investigation. This applies regardless of whether the incident(s) took place within or outside school.

### **3. Records kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

3.1. As stated at 2.2 above it is useful and recommended practice for school staff to have one standard pro forma for recording all 'welfare' and child protection concerns.

3.2. The concern form should be passed to the DSL who will make a judgement about what action needs to be taken, in accordance with local inter-agency safeguarding procedures, using the Threshold Tool, if necessary. The decision about any action, whether or not a referral is made to Social Care, will be recorded clearly by the DSL.

3.3. Concerns which initially seem trivial may turn out to be vital pieces of information later, so it is important to give as much detail as possible. A concern raised may not progress further than a conversation by the DSL with the parent, or, at the other end of the scale, could lead to matters being heard in a court.

3.4. All 'lower level' / pastoral concerns about a child's welfare, which will generally have been discussed with parents/carers, are kept in the child's main file. Alternatively, some schools have adopted their own systems of collating such welfare concerns, but whichever system is in place, these records should not be labelled 'child protection'.

3.5. It is never good practice to keep pupil welfare records in a diary or day-book system. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues relating to an individual pupil over a period of time are seen as a whole that a pattern can be identified indicating a child protection concern.

### **4. Starting a School Child Protection file**

4.1. A school child protection file does not necessarily mean that the pupil is or has been the subject of a child protection conference or plan. 'Child Protection File' denotes a high level of school concern which has warranted referral to/involvement of, and in most cases assessment by, child care social workers.

4.2. It is the responsibility of the DSL to start a school Child Protection File when a social worker is or was involved, e.g.:-

- a) A formal referral is made by the school to Children's Social Care on an inter-agency referral form or
- b) Social Care inform the school they have commenced an assessment in relation to a pupil resulting from information from another source or
- c) A Child Protection File is forwarded to the school by a previous school or pre-school attended by the pupil or
- d) A child who is in care/looked after transfers into the school or
- e) A pupil is privately fostered

- 4.3. It is not good practice to make 'family files'; each child should have his/her own record which includes information specific to him/her and which will be sent to the next school at the time of transfer. The names of siblings and/or other children who live in the household who also attend the school should be clearly noted on individual files.
- 4.4. If two (or more) pupils at the school are referred to Social Care for the same concern (for example, an allegation of sexually harmful behaviour), then child protection files will be started on both/all pupils.
- 4.5. 'Document wallet' - type files are not ideal as the papers therein can easily fall out or get 'out of order'.
- 4.6. School child protection files are never 'closed' or de-categorised. Once a school has started a child protection file, the chronology is maintained so that any future concerns can be considered in the context of past events, even if Social Care ceases involvement.
- 4.7. Note - If there is an allocated social worker because a child is disabled or a young carer and there are no child protection concerns then a child protection file should not be started.

## 5. Adopted children

- 5.1. When a pupil is admitted to a school in Reception class and parents provide the information that s/he was adopted prior to commencing education, this should be recorded with their permission on the main school file in order that appropriate support can be provided in future if necessary. In these situations, it is not necessary to start a child protection file **unless** the criteria described above (at 4.2a and 4.2b) also apply.
- 5.2. Some older adopted children will have school child protection files because they were initially in care/looked after and were subsequently adopted. During the period when the child is 'placed for adoption' (prior to an adoption order being made) any file that contains information that identifies both the birth family and the adoptive family must be classed as highly sensitive and this information should only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.
- 5.3. Once the adoption order has been made the DSL in the school that holds the child protection file must overhaul the file. The principle is that there must be nothing that identifies the child's birth name or the birth family. In sifting the file it is acceptable to

destroy documents that will continue to be held by other agencies: for example, child protection conference minutes and LAC review minutes which will be in Social Care records.

- 5.4. A chronology should be prepared that gives an overview of the information previously held in the file but **without giving the child's birth name or any details which would identify the birth family.**
- 5.5. The overhauled file should only contain the new chronology and any information that has originated from within school (for example concern forms). This file should now be in the child's new name, contain no information which identifies the birth name or birth family, will be held in the school as long as the child remains or sent onto a new school as described (at 9) below.
- 5.6. Please note that once a child is adopted, all school records, not just CP files, must be amended so that there is nothing which gives the birth name or identifies the birth family.

## 6. The format of child protection files

- 6.1. It is helpful if individual files have a front sheet with key information about the pupil and contact details of parents/carers, social worker and any other relevant professionals.
- 6.2. If the child is Looked-After the front sheet should include important information about legal status, parental responsibility, arrangements for contact with birth parents and extended family, levels of authority delegated to carers and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.
- 6.3. If a pupil is or was subject of a child protection plan or in care/looked after, this should be highlighted in some way to make it immediately obvious to anyone accessing the record.
- 6.4. It is a multi-agency standard that children's child protection files must have at the front an up to date chronology of *significant* incidents or events *and* subsequent actions/outcomes. Maintaining the chronology is an important part of the DSL role; it aids the DSL, Deputy and others to see the central issues 'at a glance' and helps to identify patterns of events and behaviours.
- 6.5. It should make sense as a 'standalone' document: anyone else reading the chronology should be able to follow easily what the concerns are/have been, whether the concerns have escalated and why, plus the actions taken by the school to support and protect the child. This will be particularly useful for DSLs in receiving schools when pupils transfer, for professionals involved in collating information for Serious Case Reviews and for parents/pupils/ex-pupils if they view the record.
- 6.6. Once a chronology is started it should be updated as appropriate even if Social Care later ceases involvement (see 4.6 above).
- 6.7. The file should be well organised and include, as appropriate, school 'concern forms', copies of correspondence, school reports to and minutes of child protection conferences, documents relating to children in care/looked after etc. The DSL will decide which relevant

information which pre-dates the starting of the child protection file, such as CAF or other pastoral care documentation, will also be included.

## 7. Storage

- 7.1. All records relating to child protection concerns are sensitive and confidential so will be kept in a secure (i.e. locked at all times) filing cabinet, separate from other school files, and accessible through the DSL, the Deputy(ies) and other senior staff in larger schools.
- 7.2. The pupil's general school file should be marked in some way (e.g. a yellow star) to indicate that a child protection file exists. All staff who may need to consult a child's school file should be made aware of what the symbol means and to speak to the DSL if necessary if they see this symbol and have concerns. For example, a member of the office staff who is looking in the main file for a parent's contact details because of unexplained absence might decide to report this to the DSL if they see the indicator, in case the absence is significant.

## 8. Sharing of and access to child protection records

- 8.1. It is highly unlikely that all members of staff need to know the details of a child's situation, or that there should be widespread access to the records. Access to, and sharing of, information should be on a need-to-know basis, decided case by case. The DSL is the best person to decide this. Consideration must also be given to *what* needs to be shared. Generally speaking, the closer the day-to-day contact with the child, the more likely the need to have some information.
- 8.2. The child who is the subject of a child protection record has the right to access the file, *unless* to do so would affect his/her health or well-being or that of another person, or would be likely to prejudice a criminal investigation or a Section 47 assessment (which relates to significant harm) under the Children Act 1989.
- 8.3. Parents (i.e. those with parental responsibility in law) are entitled to see their child's child protection file, with the same exemptions as apply to the child's right to access the record. Note that an older pupil may be entitled to refuse access to the record by his/her parents. As a guide, this applies to pupils who are 12 years of age or above, if they are of normal development or maturity.
- 8.4. References by name to children other than the pupil who is the subject of the file should be removed when disclosing records, unless consent is obtained from the individual/s concerned (or their parents/carer on their behalf). Care must be taken to ensure all identifying information is removed from the copy of the record to be shared.
- 8.5. Always seek advice from your legal advisor or Dorset Data Protection Officer (01305 838125, [data.protection@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)) if there are any concerns or doubt about a child or parents reading records. However, it is generally good practice to share all information held unless there is a valid reason to withhold it, e.g. to do so would place the child or any other person at risk of harm. Any requests to see the child's record should be made in writing to give time for confidential information, such as any details of other pupils, to be removed.

- 8.6. In respect of requests from pupils or parents for information which wholly or partly consists of an educational record, access should be granted within 15 school days. This might be relevant to 'welfare' concerns in a main school file, for example. Viewing-only access to these records is free but it is reasonable to charge for copies on a sliding scale from £1 - £50 (maximum) depending on the number of pages.
- 8.7. However, should the request only seek access to a child protection file (which is not classed as an educational record), access should be granted within 40 calendar days. A discretionary maximum fee of £10 can be charged for viewing access to or a copy of a child protection record.
- 8.8. If the record to be disclosed contains information about an adult professional, that information can be disclosed if it relates to the performance by that person of their job or other official duties e.g. a reference to a teacher in their teaching role or a school nurse in their nursing role. However, if the reference refers to that individual's private life, it should be removed (unless this relates to a child protection matter which is relevant to the record to be disclosed).
- 8.9. Child protection information should not normally be shared with professionals other than those from Social Care, the Police, Health or the Local Authority. Ofsted and other school inspectors can view individual child protection files. Information should not be released to parents' solicitors on request; advice should be sought from the school's legal advisor in such cases.
- 8.10. Governors, including the Nominated Governor, should not access the records.

## 9. Transfer of child protection records

- 9.1. When a pupil transfers to another school (including to a Learning Centre because of permanent exclusion) the DSL should inform the receiving school as soon as possible in person or by telephone that child protection records exist. The original records must be passed on either by hand or sent by recorded delivery, separate from the child's main school file. Care must be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible.
- 9.2. If the records are to be posted, they should be copied and these copies retained until there has been confirmation in writing that the originals have arrived at the new school. They can then be shredded.
- 9.3. Whether child protection files are passed on by hand or posted, there should be written evidence of the transfer (such as a form or slip of paper signed and dated by a member of staff at the receiving school.) This receipt should be retained by the originating school for 6 years (in line with guidance from the Records Management Society).
- 9.4. If the pupil is removed from the roll to be home educated, the school should pass the child protection file to the LA EHE Administrator and a receipt obtained as described above.

- 9.5. If a pupil with a child protection record leaves the school without a forwarding address and no contact is received from a new school, the DSL should follow the school's Child Missing Education (CME) procedures. If there is reason to suspect the pupil is suffering harm then the DSL will refer to Social Care in the usual way.
- 9.6. If a child arrives in the school in an unplanned way and/or there are concerns about them from the outset, it is worth contacting the previous school for a discussion with the DSL. There might be a CP file which has not been passed on.
- 9.7. School 'welfare' or pastoral records (i.e. where concerns or issues have been raised but there has been **no** referral to or involvement by a social worker) should also be passed on to the next school for their information and can be included in the main school file, for example. In respect of data protection, parents/carers should be made aware (either individually or through newsletters, for example) that information is transferred in this way to enable the next school to properly support their child. Most parents will understand the reason for this but if for whatever reason a parent disagrees with you passing on non child protection documents, you should not do so.

## 10. 'Dual registered' pupils

- 10.1. Where a pupil is on roll at the school and starts to attend a Learning Centre (LC), the chronology and other relevant information in the child protection file should be copied and passed to the DSL at the LC at the earliest opportunity. Because of the nature of such 'bespoke' arrangements for individual pupils, the two DSLs should agree on which one of them will keep the chronology updated and how best to communicate to each other significant events and issues in relation to that pupil.

## 11. Retention of records

- 11.1. The school should retain the record for as long as the pupil remains in school and then transferred as described above.
- 11.2. Guidance from the Records Management Society is that when a pupil with a child protection record reaches statutory school leaving age (or where the pupil completed 6<sup>th</sup> form studies), the last school attended should keep the child protection file until the pupil's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. It should then be shredded (and a record kept of this having been done, date, and why).
- 11.3. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse has instructed relevant organisations, including schools and colleges, that they should NOT destroy, for the foreseeable future, any of their records that could potentially come within the scope of the inquiry (i.e. any records relating to sexual abuse).

## 12. Electronic child protection records

- 12.1. Electronic records must be password protected with access strictly controlled in the same way as paper records.



- 12.2. They should be in the same format as paper records (i.e. with well-maintained chronologies etc.) so that they are up to date if/when printed, if necessary.
- 12.3. Electronic files must not be transferred electronically to other schools unless there is a secure system in place (such as cjsm, GCSX or IronPort) but should be printed in their entirety, linked with paper documentation such as conference minutes and transferred as described in section 9 above. When the receipt has been returned to confirm that the file has been received at the new school, the computer record should be deleted.

### **13. Sharing information with Further Education (FE) Colleges**

- 13.1. A protocol is in place with DSLs at FE colleges: at the start of each academic year they will send to secondary school DSLs a list of newly enrolled students who have previously attended the school, requesting any relevant information. Secondary school DSLs will use their professional judgement but should always disclose if a young person is in care/looked after, is or has been subject of a child protection plan or is assessed as posing a risk to themselves or other students.
- 13.2. Note this applies only to Dorset schools and FE Colleges with whom the protocol has been agreed.

END