

Sensory Consortium Service
Good Outcomes Positive Futures



The DfE expects to publish revised guidance on:

Relationships, sex and health education (paragraph 128)

Gender questioning children (paragraph 204)

If these are published over the summer, this will be reflected in the September publication of KCSIE (through updated links, rather than substantial changes).

Policy last reviewed: July 2025

Agreed by: Leadership and Management Team

Shared with staff: September Service Meeting 2025

Frequency of review: Annually

Date of next review: July 2026

Head of Service: Jane Peters

Service Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jane Peters

jane.peters@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Gill Wilson gill.wilson@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Telephone number: Central Office 01628 796786

Multi –Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contact details:

Emergency number for all 6 LAS Emergency Duty 01344786543

RBWM/ AFC MASH: 01628 683150

Slough MASH: 01753 875362

Bracknell Forest MASH: 01344 352005

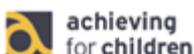
Wokingham MASH: 0118 9088002

Reading MASH: 0118 9373641

West Berkshire Lead: MASH: 01635 503190

LADO: 07774 332675

lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk



Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service is hosted by Achieving for Children on behalf of RBWM as part of the Berkshire Joint Agreement between RBWM, Slough, Bracknell Forest, Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire.



Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service: Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF

T: 01628 796786

E: sensory.consortium@achievingforchildren.org.uk

W: berkshiresensoryconsortium.co.uk

In the policy:

- The Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service may be referred to as BSCS or the Service
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead may be referred to as the DSL
- Children and Young People may be referred to as Children or CYP

Table of Contents

1	Definitions	3
2	Introduction	3
3	Roles and Responsibilities	6
4	Types of abuse	13
5	Responding to signs of abuse	16
6	Record-keeping	22
7	Photography and Images	22
8	Early Help	22
9	Promoting safeguarding and welfare through the curriculum	22
10	Allegations of abuse against staff	23
11	Whistleblowing	23
12	Children Looked After	24
13	Children with Special Educational Needs	24
14	Physical Intervention	24
15	Summary	25
	Appendix A	26
	Appendix B	29
	Appendix C	31

1 Definitions

1.1 'Safeguarding' is defined in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)** 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.

1.2 'Child Protection' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

1.3 'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

1.4 'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster carers.

1.5 'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff and volunteers working in or on behalf of the BSCS.

2 Introduction

2.1 We recognise that safeguarding and child protection is an essential part of our duty of care to all children and young people (CYP) and all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment when working with them and their families. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all CYP is everyone's responsibility and everyone has a role to play in protecting them. We recognise that our Service is part of a wider safeguarding system for CYP and work closely with other agencies to promote their welfare. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider the wishes of, and at all times, what is in the best interests of each CYP. We recognise that because of the regular contact with children, BSCS staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.

2.2 The purpose of this policy is to;

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate the Service's commitment to keeping children safe;
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to the BSCS safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- Ensure that staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

2.3 The BSCS Service is committed to the following principles;

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- All staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- Working with other agencies is essential to promote safeguarding and protect children from harm.
- Early help and providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

2.4 The safeguarding aims of the BSCS Service, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) are to;

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm or abuse and act to protect them;
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm;
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities;
- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information;
- ensure that everyone in the BSCS Support Service understands the safeguarding procedures; and to
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.

2.5 This policy refers to a range of documents (statutory and non-statutory) and further reading.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (May 2019)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (2015)
- FGM Act 2003 Mandatory Reporting Guidance 2016
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (updated 2019)
- Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners' guidance 2018
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children Missing in Education (2016)

- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools (May 2018)

2.6 Scope

- 2.6.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff and volunteers working in or on behalf of the BSCS Service. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.
- 2.6.2 Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) in this policy, it should be understood that the BSCS Service will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

Statutory framework, key statutory and non-statutory guidance

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, BSCS will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Children Act 1989 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#)
- [London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)
- [Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills](#)
- [Teachers' Standards](#)
- [What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)
- [Information Sharing](#)
- [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2021](#)

We take seriously our responsibility to ensure that we have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which we believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse.

Our procedures also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse, including low level concerns.

We will ensure that all staff read and understand:

- BSCS's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) [Part One] and school leaders and staff that work directly with children will also read Annex B
- AFC Code of Conduct
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused

We will ensure that all staff are aware of:

- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The identity of BSCS's Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)
- The additional vulnerabilities of children who are looked after/previously looked after, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and children who are young carers.

Copies of the above documents will be provided to all staff as part of the induction process and on an annual basis.

BSCS will publish our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on our website and hard copies will be available on request from the Service Support Officer.

The roles of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be explicit in their job descriptions and we will ensure that they have the time and resources to fulfil their duties.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Role of the Head of Service of the BSCS.

3.1.2 The Head of Service will:

- Ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation;
- Ensure that policies, procedure and training in the BSCS Service is effective and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner;
- Ensure that BSCS Service has an effective child protection and safeguarding policy;
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and reviewed by the Team Leads.
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff;
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- The DSL will meet at least termly with the Head of Service to review safeguarding policy and procedures in the Service
- Ensure that the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the BSCS Head of Service job description;
- Decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;

- Organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of term activities or absences;
 - Ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance and to work with HR to ensure that the single, central record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children and young adults;
 - Respond to allegations of abuse against all other members of staff;
 - Ensure that the Head of Service or DSL will lead any investigation;
 - Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
 - Ensure that the BSCS takes into account the six Berkshire local authorities Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and supply information as requested by the three safeguarding partners (the Local Authorities, a clinical commissioning group for an area within Berkshire and the chief office of police for the police area within the local authorities);
 - Ensure that the BSCS works with social care, the police, health services and other services to; promote the welfare of children; provide a coordinated offer of early help when need is identified; contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans and to protect children from harm.
 - Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012);
 - Ensure that children's social care have access to the BSCS to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).
 - Ensure that the BSCS adhere to the Achieving for Children Code of Conduct;
 - Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from education;
- **The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads**
- The DSL will:
- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the Service;
 - Ensure that all staff in the Service undergo safeguarding and child protection training;
 - To ensure that all new staff / volunteers have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise
 - Ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance
 - Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
 - Be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
 - Liaise with the Local Authority and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023);
 - Identify if children may benefit from early help;
 - Make referrals to the Local Authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) where children are at risk of significant harm.

- Support staff to make referrals to the Local Authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) where children are at risk of significant harm.
- Support the staff with regards to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed;
- Be available during school or college hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the event that they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- Undertake training to equip them with the skills to carry out the role and update this every two years;
- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025);
- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;
- Provide staff in the Service with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- To keep detailed, accurate, secure, written electronic records of all information concerning Safeguarding and Child Protection issues and concerns, and to keep this information securely on a Safeguarding Drive from the regular pupil records.
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves the Service;
- Lead responsibility for Online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on BSCS devices.
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of the BSCS acts in the best interests of the child;

Further details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).

○ **The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service**

- Service staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early to provide help for children. All staff in the BSCS:
 - Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;
 - Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused or neglected;

- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse; including indicators of abuse and neglect for specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation;
- Will be made aware of; the safeguarding and child protection policy; the staff behaviour policy; information about the safeguarding response to children missing in education; the role of the designated safeguarding lead and systems in the Service that support safeguarding and child protection;
- Will be provided with a copy of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education annually and receive annually updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities;
- Should know what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and never promise confidentiality when a child makes a disclosure; Will be made aware of the early help process and understand their role in it;
- If any member of staff has a concern about a particular child in their care, they must report their concerns to, and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in the Service. **If the child is in a school or setting, this must be to the DSL or Deputy DSL in the school/setting. The Service's DSL or Deputy DSL must also be notified of the concern. If the child is not in a school or setting it should be to the Service's DSL.**
- Service Staff must provide the DSL/ DDSL with a google form signed, written and dated record of their concerns, using the standard proforma used in the school or the Service's own proforma.
- **In most circumstances it should be for the school/setting to take forward any concerns raised by BSCS staff. If in doubt, staff should discuss this with the Service DSL. This is to ensure there is absolute clarity about who is deciding what action needs to be taken.**
- Should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance;
- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- Will be made aware of the process and be prepared to make referrals to Children's Social Care (though the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure; and
- All BSCS teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

● **Safe Service, safe staff**

We will ensure that:

- at least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last five years

- safer recruitment practices are adhered to including appropriate DBS checks, reference checks and any additional checks relevant to the role undertaken. AFC has a Safer Recruitment Policy, which is available as a separate document
- all staff are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with staff, pupils and parents and adhere to the BSCS's code of conduct
- as a result of learning from a local Serious Case Review, there will be no alcohol for any events on any site involving staff, pupils, parents or other stakeholders
- as a result of learning from a local Serious Case Review, there will be no use of alcohol by staff or pupils on trips or at residential units
- adequate risk assessments are in place including for off-site activities and trips
- any disciplinary proceedings against staff related to child protection matters are concluded in full in accordance with Government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, RBWM Multi Agency Safeguarding Board LADO and HR policy, procedures and guidance
- staff have the confidence, and are fully aware of how to report misconduct, including low level concerns
- all staff receive information about the BSCS's safeguarding arrangements, AFC Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, the role and names of the DSL and deputy, and Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 and Annex A on induction, as well as other relevant procedures such as health and safety and online safety
- all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which is regularly updated. In addition, they receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually
- all members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns
- all staff have regular safeguarding awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- the safeguarding and child protection policy is made available via our website and parents and carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy via the website
- all parents and carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the safeguarding and child protection policy and reference to it on our website
- BSCS provides a co-ordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contribute to early help arrangements and inter-agency working and plans.

- Outside agencies who we provide joint activities with are aware of the BSCS's safeguarding and child protection policy, guidelines and procedures
- All staff will be given a copy of Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and will sign to say they have read and understood it. The DSL and Service DSL are required to read the whole document.

Extended activities and off-site arrangements

- Where extended activities are provided by and managed by the service, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply.
- When our pupils attend off-school activities, organised by BSCS, we will ensure that effective child protection arrangements are in place.
- When our pupils attend an alternative provision provider, we will obtain written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that we would otherwise perform in respect of our own staff. We follow the statutory guidance for alternative provision and the Alternative Provision handbook alongside the Quality Assurance evaluation framework.
- Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from an educational setting we will work together with the parent/carer, EHCP Coordinator and other professionals to ensure that this decision has been made in the best interests of the child. We recognise that this is particularly relevant where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Media recordings, audio, image and video (including digital files)

The vast majority of people who take or view images or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect pupils, we will:

- seek their consent and parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications). If the young person is over 18 they may give their own permission.
- use only the pupil's first name with an image unless the young person is over 18 and has requested that their full name is used
- ensure that pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them
- ensure that pupils do not take photographs or video images of other students without their express permission and the permission of a member of staff

Staff are permitted to make media recordings as set out in the BSCS Use and Storage of Digital Media Content Policy and the permission form.

The appropriate consent must be in place and follow our policies in respect of sharing, distribution and publication. Media images must be taken, edited, stored or archived on to Service systems using Service equipment in line with our Privacy notice and our AFC retention schedule.

● **Staff training**

All staff members receive ongoing safeguarding and child protection training. All new members of staff have bespoke safeguarding training as part of their induction in the Service. This includes training on how to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to any concerns. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Staff also undertake regular online safety training.

The DSL attends the multi-agency Local safeguarding partnership training within 12 weeks of taking up their responsibilities.

The BSCS ensures that its DSLs attend the Designated Safeguarding Lead training and conferences/Networks to keep abreast of child protection learning and developments, at least biannually.

In order for staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, the BSCS has committed to training staff throughout the academic year. All staff members will be made aware of the service's safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their induction. As part of this training and their annual refresher, they will also receive;

- This 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy';
- A copy of the Code of Conduct
- Copies of Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)

The Service recognises that children may engage in risky behaviours that may put them at additional risk of danger. These can include drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and 'sexting'¹.

- The BSCS recognises that abuse can take many different forms. Staff will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if the Service believes that a child is at risk of or is the victim of;
 - *Recognising abuse*
 - *Physical abuse*
 - *Emotional abuse*
 - *Sexual abuse*
 - *Neglect*

¹ Also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

- *Indicators of abuse*
- *Impact of abuse*
- *Taking action*
- *Mental health*
- *Domestic abuse*
- *Homelessness*
- *Children with family members in prison*
- *Contextual safeguarding and exploitation*
- *Children missing education*
- *Children who run away or go missing from home or care*
- *Child sexual exploitation (CSE)*
- *Child criminal exploitation (CCE)*
- *County lines*
- *Serious youth violence*
- *School related weapons incidents*
- *Child on Child abuse*
- *Bullying*
- *Sexual violence and sexual harassment*
- *Up skirting*
- *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes*
- *Cybercrime*
- *Online safety*
- *So-called 'honour based' abuse*
- *Female genital mutilation (FGM)*
- *Forced marriage*
- *Child trafficking and modern slavery*
- *Private fostering*
- *Radicalisation and extremism*
- *Suicide and self-harm*
- *Fabricated or induced illnesses;*
- *trafficking and modern slavery.*
- *Disguised compliance*

*The DfE has also updated the list of online safeguarding harms from 2024 to include misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories

4 Types of Abuse

As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse and should be able to recognise signs of abuse. We recognise that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are complex and can rarely be covered by one label. Abuse can take many forms and can involve directly inflicting harm on a child, or failing to protect a child from harm. The main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are;

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect.
- Disguised Compliance

- Types of abuse (Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023)

Type of abuse	Information
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another and this particularly relevant when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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.
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

<p>Child sexual exploitation (CSE)</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Neglect</p>	<p>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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.</p> <p>Neglect can occur in affluent families and can also centre around Educational Neglect.</p> <p>Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023)</p>
<p>Disguised Compliance</p>	<p>Disguised compliance involves care-givers presenting an appearance of being co-operative and supportive in order to avoid scrutiny, suspicion or concern. These behaviours may include:</p>

	<p>Misdirecting; dominating discussions; doing 'just enough'; difficult to engage; being critical of other professionals; giving accounts that are different to a child's.</p> <p>A parent's or carer's behaviour can make it difficult for staff to recognise abuse or neglect at an early enough stage or delay reporting it.</p>
--	---

- Indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix B.
- If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care (through the MASH) and any member of staff can make this referral. A Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be available at all times, but in exceptional circumstances the member of staff should speak to a member of the Leadership Team or seek advice directly from social care and then take appropriate action. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware as soon as possible.
- Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant. Staff should not assume that someone else will report concerns.
- The BSCS recognises that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, the Service will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child;
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs;
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
 - has a health condition
 - 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 misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
 - has returned home to their family from care;
 - is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
 - is a privately fostered child.²
- The BSCS will also take action to protect;

² Taken from paragraph 18, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2025\)](#)

- Children missing education;
 - Children missing from home or care.
- There are other familial issues that can have a detrimental impact on children. We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) to support children and families in the following circumstances;
- Children facing the court procedures and/or children in the court system;
 - Children with family members in prison;
 - Children who are homeless.
 - Children who are particularly vulnerable
 - Children who have a social worker
 - Children looked after and previously looked after
 -
- All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

5 Responding to signs of abuse

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a child’s welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, initially to the DSL in the school or setting and also to the Service DSL. On occasions when the designated safeguarding lead is not available, it should be reported to the deputy safeguarding lead without delay. Although any member of staff can make a referral to Children’s Social Care, where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.2 If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to children’s social care or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

5.3 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- Any significant changes in a child’s presentation;
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- Any disclosures of abuse that children have made.

5.4 There will be occasions where a child discloses abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will;

- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;
- not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
- Listen, only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions;
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Find out just enough to be sure of the need to refer, and keep any questions open rather than closed;
- Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled;
- Do not cross examine, interview, probe or ask to see any injury that is not visible.
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead in the setting as soon as possible and by the end of the day;
- Only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it;
- Write up the disclosure without delay, and pass it to the designated safeguarding lead in the setting and followed up by the Service proforma for the BSCS DSL. Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the member of staff's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
- Remember Education is a referrer, not an investigative agency for child protection matters. An incident may eventually end up as a court case and children's evidence can all too easily be compromised by leading questions or repeated recital.

5.5 The designated safeguarding lead in the school or early years setting will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of the BSCS staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure. For pre-school children in the home the Service DSL will make a decision about the action that is needed;

- In cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSL in the school or setting will refer cases to the MASH for statutory intervention or in the case of a pre-school child the DSL from the Service will refer. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the MASH. However, if the service is worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.
- If parents do not consent to a referral but the school or Service believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to children's social care.

5.6 See page 16 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025).

5.7 In cases where members of staff become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the police without delay. Staff should also refer this to the DSL. The legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either;

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

5.8 The BSCS Service understands that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and peer on peer abuse is taken very seriously. Peer on peer abuse can include bullying, cyber-bullying, physical abuse, sexting, sexual violence and/or harassment, upskirting, and initiation/hazing ceremonies. The Service recognise that safeguarding issues can manifest as peer on peer abuse.

5.8.1 All members of staff can request to see the setting's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

5.8.2 In the event that an allegation of peer on peer abuse is made, victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported by the settings policy

5.8.3 The Service will never pass off peer on peer abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

5.8.4 The BSCS works with children and young people who have SEN and or disabilities in a range of settings and as such may be more vulnerable to peer on peer abuse.

5.8.5 The Service will adhere to guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools (May 2018) when responding to incidents of peer on peer abuse.

5.8.6 All staff will be made aware that 'up skirting' is a criminal offence.

5.9 Youth Produced Sexual Imagery ('sexting')

5.9.1 'Sexting' refers to any sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery, specifically nude and semi-nude images and/or videos between children. This includes;

- A person under the age of 18 creating and sharing sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- A person under the age of 18 sharing 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 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

5.9.2 The Service has a responsibility to understand the risks relating to children and 'sexting' and how to keep themselves safe online.

5.9.3 Any incidents or suspected incidents of 'sexting' should be reported to the DSL in the setting or the Service without delay.

5.9.4 Once reported to the DSL, the DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action. This could include;

- Confiscation of mobile phones in line with guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation, (January 2018);
- Referrals to the police and/or MASH;
- Sanctions in accordance with behaviour policy within the setting;
- Support for young people involved to prevent reoccurrence;

5.9.5 The Service recognises that safeguarding incidents can be associated with factors outside the school and may take place outside of school. We will always consider contextual safeguarding factors when responding to safeguarding incidents.

5.9.6 Any incidents of 'sexting' involving the following will result in a MASH and/or Police referral;

- Adult involvement;
- Coercion or blackmail;
- Children under the age of 13;
- Extreme, or violent content;
- Immediate risk of harm.

5.9.7 Staff will not view images or videos on pupil devices. Confiscated devices will be stored securely and passed to the relevant agencies.

5.9.8 We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in 'sexting'.

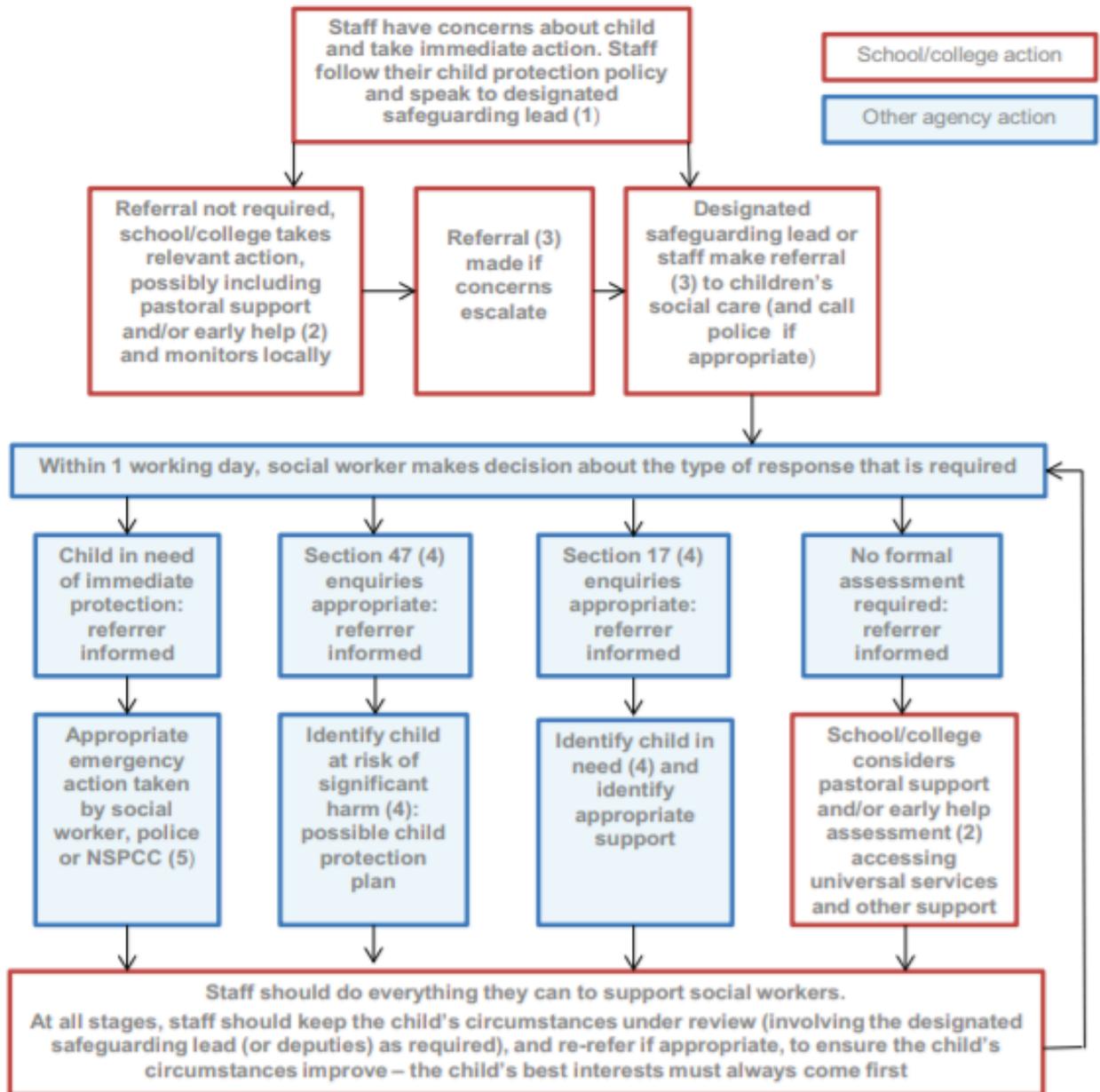
5.9.9 We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves. Children will always be supported to retrieve and delete the images.

5.10 Serious Violence

5.10.1 All staff will be made aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk of, or are involved with serious violent crime.

5.10.2 All staff will be made aware of the risks associated with serious violence, criminal networks and gangs and understand the measures in place to prevent these.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



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

6 Record-keeping

6.1 An electronic written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept securely in individual children's files on the safeguarding drive. This will be separate from the main service files on Liquid Logic and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff. A flag on the CYP's records will indicate information is kept elsewhere.

6.2 Staff will submit all concerns in writing to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, but conversations will also be followed up in writing. In a setting the setting proforma can be used and a copy taken for the DSL of the Team. If not in a setting the service proforma will be used for recording

6.3 All data processed by the Service is done so in line with the General Data Protection and the Service retention policy Guidelines.

6.4 If the BSCS is the last school that the pupil attends, their child protection file will be securely stored by the school until their 26th birthday is reached, when it will be securely disposed of.

7 Photography and Images

7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at service events for promotional reasons will be sought

7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify the Service if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.

7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other personal information unless as part of a case study or celebration of achievements where the parent and young person give specific permission for this purpose.

7.4 Photographs of children will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

8 Early Help

8.1 The BSCS is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children and a referral may be made via the MASH who will triage the help needed.

9 Promoting safeguarding and welfare through the curriculum

9.1 The BSCS recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.

10 Allegations of abuse against staff

10.1 The BSCS takes all allegations against staff seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).

10.2 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Head of Service, it must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

10.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of Service staff other than the Head of Service, it must be reported to the Head of Service without delay.

10.4 Allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Head of Service as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

10.5 The Head of Service should consider if the allegation meets the threshold for LADO intervention. The details of the RBWM LADO can be found at the front of this policy.

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff / volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or in relation to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

10.6 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the AFC designated officer within 24 hours.

10.7 If a child has suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral will also be made.

10.8 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the AFC designated officer will provide information and support to the Service in managing the allegation.

10.9 A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, or would have been removed if they had not resigned.

[Guidance for safer working practice 2019](#)

[Guidance for safer working practice addendum April 2020](#)

11 Whistleblowing

11.1 The BSCS operates a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or the Services' safeguarding processes to the Leadership and Management team.

11.2 The Leadership and Management team will take all concerns seriously.

11.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in the Service, they should refer to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures and the RBWM Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

Staff can call: 0800 800 5000 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

12 Children Looked After

12.1 The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. The Service recognises that children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities.

12.2 The BSCS is committed to working with The Virtual School in each Berkshire LA and other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

13 Children with Special Educational Needs

13.1 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), The BSCS is aware that children with additional needs or disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse and additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect. This could be because;

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.³

13.2 Staff will be trained in recognising signs of abuse in children with SEN and disabilities.

13.3 Staff will take into account the needs of a child when responding to concerns of abuse or when taking a disclosure. We recognise that some children require specialist intervention to communicate and advice will be sought in these circumstances.

14 Physical intervention

The BSCS promotes a positive environment for all staff, pupils and visitors. We have a physical intervention policy which is available as a separate document. Staff will always employ de-escalation techniques to stop situations escalating and we acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering themselves or others. At all times, minimal force is used to

3

prevent injury to another person. Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained. [AfC physical intervention training \(primary\)](#)

All incidents involving physical intervention will be recorded and signed by a witness. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff have been given 'safe practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries.

[Positive environments where children can flourish](#)

[Use of reasonable force in schools](#)

15 Summary

15.1 The Service is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child. For further information or if you have any queries about this policy, please contact the Head of Service.

Reviewed July 2025

Head of Service

Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service

Appendix A

Further Safeguarding Information

Types of Abuse

As outlined in paragraph 4.6, the service will take action if we believe a child is at risk of or is suffering from abuse. Abuse is not limited to physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. For further information on the definitions of the types of abuse below, please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), Annex A.

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. Abuse, neglect or exploitation are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

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

There are four categories of abuse.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse that 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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another and this particularly relevant when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects. It may involve serious bullying (including online bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the

exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

BSCS is aware of the impact of the Everyone's Invited website and the prevalence of harmful sexual behaviour. We encourage all pupils to speak out either in person or to report concerns using our anonymous reporting system.

Neglect

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

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

Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Neglect can occur in affluent families and can also centre around Educational Neglect.

Threshold Document

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For those reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits/be hungry/take food from others
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful/anxious
- be reckless with regard to their own or others' safety
- self-harm
- low self-esteem
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become uninterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol

- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age and/or stage of development
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new ‘friends’ or adults recently acquainted with the child’s family

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

It is very important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

Impact of abuse

The sustained abuse or neglect of children physically, emotionally or sexually can have long term effects on the child’s health, development and wellbeing. It can impact significantly on a child’s self-esteem, self-image and on their perception of self and of others. The more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) a child has, the more likely they are to suffer long term. The effects can extend into adult life and lead to difficulties in forming and sustaining positive and close relationships. In some situations, it can affect parenting ability.

Taking action

Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of ‘It could happen here’.

Key points for staff to remember when taking action are:

- in an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child, for example call 999
- report your concern to the DSL as quickly as possible – immediately when there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a Cause for Concern form, seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief

Mental health

Mental health issues affect at least 1 in 10 children and young people. They include depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, disordered eating, panic attacks, sleep problems and many other conditions and behaviours. They are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives.

BSCS recognises that mental health issues can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation and is aware that only appropriately-trained professionals should attempt to make a

diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health issue, or be at risk of developing one.

Possible warning signs include:

- Persistent sadness — two or more weeks
- Withdrawing from or avoiding social interactions
- Hurting oneself or talking about hurting oneself
- Talking about death or suicide
- Outbursts or extreme irritability
- Out-of-control behaviour that can be harmful
- Drastic changes in mood, behaviour or personality
- Changes in eating habits
- Loss of weight
- Difficulty sleeping
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in academic performance
- Avoiding or missing school

BSCS aims to promote positive mental health for all staff and pupils.

Useful links: Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance NSPCC Mind Kooth and The Mental Health Toolkit

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- economic
- emotional
- controlling or coercive behaviour

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs.

BSCS recognises that exposure to domestic abuse 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. BSCS acknowledges that domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Homelessness

BSCS recognises that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The school DSL is aware of contact details and referral routes into 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, including new poverty induced by the pandemic
- rent arrears
- domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour
- the family being asked to leave a property

If a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral to children's social care will be made.

Children with family members in prison

BSCS recognises that children who have a family member in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The school will work with agencies and resources such as NICCO to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Contextual safeguarding and exploitation

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

The focus of contextual safeguarding and exploitation (CS&E) is implementing child safeguarding practices into community spaces to ensure that children are protected from the harm they experience outside of the family home. This focus moves beyond just assessing parenting capacity to safeguard a child at home, to assessing the

impact of peer groups and community spaces (schools and neighbourhoods) on a child's safety and wellbeing outside the home.

It looks to identify the influences outside the family that can impact the parent-child relationship and the safety of a child in the community. It then adapts the child protection systems, safeguarding partnerships, and creates new professional networks with those who have an influence in the location so that the identified child, their family and the community are safe.

BSCS will maintain records of concerns about extrafamilial harm in the same way as other concerns are recorded and in accordance with our safeguarding procedures.

Concerns relating to significant harm and extrafamilial harm will be referred by the DSL to the Single Point of Access Team; if considered appropriate, a multi-agency strategy meeting will be held to determine threshold for significant harm.

Children missing education

We recognise that full attendance at school is important to the wellbeing of all our pupils and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Attendance is monitored closely and we work in partnership with AfC when patterns of absence give rise to concern.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation, including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage and other harmful practices.

We will ensure, where possible, that we have more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This will give BSCS additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Children who run away or go missing from home or care

BSCS recognises that children who run away or go missing - and are thus absent from their normal residence - are potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, offending and placing themselves in situations where they may suffer physical harm.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' highlights that 'Statutory Guidance on Children who Run Away or go Missing from Home or Care' (DfE 2014) requires that every child or young person who runs away or goes missing must be offered a return home interview (RHI) within 72 hours of their return.

As a service we refer to statutory DfE guidance on attendance related where safeguarding is a concern

Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

BSCS follows the London Child Protection Procedures for safeguarding children from sexual exploitation. Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation

In February 2017, the government updated the working definition of child sexual exploitation Child sexual exploitation definition and guide.

“Child sexual exploitation 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.”

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse affecting boys and girls. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Child sexual exploitation may occur without the child being aware of events, or understanding that these constitute abuse.

Child sexual exploitation is never the victim’s fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

Child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- may occur without the child’s or young person’s immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example)

- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. While age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, or access to economic or other resources

Consent

Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. If a child feels they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply (all of which are common features in cases of child sexual exploitation), consent cannot legally be given whatever the age of the child.

Key factors in child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation involves some form of exchange (sexual activity in return for something) between the victim and/or perpetrator or facilitator. Where there is no such exchange, for example, where the gain for the perpetrator is sexual gratification (or the exercise of power or control), this is described as sexual abuse (and not exploitation).

The exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or alcohol) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). The receipt of something by a child/young person does not make them any less of a victim.

It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the definition of exchange, for example a child who engages in sexual activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Links to other kinds of crime

- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual violence in intimate relationships
- Grooming (including online grooming)
- Abusive images of children and their distribution
- Drugs-related offences
- Gang-related activity
- Immigration-related offences
- Domestic servitude

Potential vulnerabilities

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- Lack of a safe or stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality for example)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Social isolation or social difficulties
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality
- Economic vulnerability
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- Having a physical or learning disability
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- Sexual identity

Possible indicators of child sexual exploitation

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc, without plausible explanation
- Gang association and/or isolation from peers and social networks
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work
- Leaving home or care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late
- Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- Returning home under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age or sexually transmitted infections
- Evidence of or suspicion of physical or sexual assault
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- Frequenting areas known for sex work

- Concerning use of internet or other social media
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional wellbeing
- Online exploitation

All young people are at risk from online exploitation and can be unaware that this is happening. Online exploitation includes the exchange of sexual communication or images and can be particularly challenging to identify and respond to. Children, young people and perpetrators are frequently more familiar with, and spend more time in, these environments than their parents and carers.

Online child sexual exploitation allows perpetrators to initiate contact with multiple potential victims and offers a perception of anonymity. Where exploitation does occur online, the transfer of images can be quickly and easily shared with others, which makes it difficult to contain the potential for further abuse.

Children may be perpetrators of abuse

It must be recognised that children may also be perpetrators of abuse, sometimes at the same time as being abused themselves.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation can happen to girls as well as boys and is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being:

- forced to work in cannabis factories
- coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines)
- forced to shoplift or pickpocket
- forced to threaten other young people
- manipulated into committing vehicle crime

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- unexplained gifts or new possessions
- association with other young people involved in exploitation
- changes in emotional wellbeing

- misuse of drugs and alcohol
- regular missing episodes or frequently coming home late
- missing school or education

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes.

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
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. While age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

For more information see: Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines

Serious youth violence

Staff at BSCS are aware of the indicators, which may signal 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
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff are aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

School-related weapons incidents

BSCS has a duty and a responsibility to protect and safeguard our pupils and staff. BSCS will inform SPA and the police of any incident involving a weapon or potential weapon.

Teachers have a number of legal powers, which include the power to search pupils without consent for a number of 'prohibited items'. These include knives and weapons; alcohol; illegal drugs and stolen items; tobacco and cigarette papers; fireworks; pornographic images; any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property; and any item banned by a school rules that has been identified in these rules as an item that may be searched for searching, screening and confiscation

BSCS recognises that children and young people involved in school-related weapons incidents, including the alleged perpetrators, are vulnerable. BSCS will provide support, protection and education to develop a full understanding of the implications of carrying, and/or using, weapons.

Child on Child abuse

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. All staff are able to recognise the indicators and signs of abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. This can include (but is not limited to):

- bullying (including online bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse within intimate partner relationships
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

In areas where gangs are prevalent, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under threat of violence.

BSCS does not tolerate any form of abuse and will not allow any such behaviour to be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

What to do:

- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern, the designated safeguarding lead should be informed.
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.
- The DSL should contact children's services to discuss the case. It is possible that children's services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a children's services referral where appropriate.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in both pupils' files.

- If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim).
- Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough investigation should take place.
- In situations where BSCS considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.
- The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

Bullying

BSCS has an anti-bullying policy which is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms, e.g. online, racist, homophobic, gender, SEND-related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents, which is shared with and analysed by the Governing Board. All staff are aware that children with SEND and/or differences or perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied or being victims of child abuse.

If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are seen to be ineffective, the headteacher and DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

BSCS follows the DfE's advice about sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE September 2021)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two pupils of any sex. They can also occur through a group of pupils sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single pupil or group of pupils.

It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys.

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. BSCS will ensure that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable at BSCS. Behaviours such as making sexual remarks (even if they are meant as compliments), grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia is not 'banter' or 'having a laugh' and will never be tolerated.

BSCS recognises that the following pupils can be especially vulnerable to sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- Pupils who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, or Trans, Questioning (LGBTQ) or who are perceived to be LGBTQ by their peers.

Sexual violence:

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

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.

Consent: 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. 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.

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. 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.

Sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, calling someone sexualised names
- sexual 'jokes' or taunting
- physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- upskirting
- online sexual harassment, which might include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (see Youth produced sexual imagery (Sexting)); unwanted sexual comments on social media; sexualised online bullying; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be stand-alone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

Harmful sexual behaviours:

Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Harmful sexual behaviours refers to problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours which are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. For more information see NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviours

When considering harmful sexual behaviours, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors to consider. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age, or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Harmful sexual behaviours will be considered in a child protection context.

BSCS recognises that pupils displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and they will be offered appropriate support.

BSCS has a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life.

BSCS will make decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as school, children's social care and the police as required.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and BSCS will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Where appropriate, immediate measures will be put in place to support and protect both the victim and the alleged perpetrator. A written record will be made and next steps discussed, taking into account the views of the victim.

A risk and needs assessment will be completed for all reports of sexual violence. The need for a risk and needs assessment for reports of sexual harassment will be considered on a case by case basis. The assessment, which will be kept under review, will consider:

- whether there may have been other victims
- the victim, especially their protection and support
- the alleged perpetrator
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at BSCS, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator or from future harm.

BSCS will ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to safeguard and support the victim, the alleged perpetrator and the school community.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the pupil and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help, or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual according to our Behaviour Policy.

Upskirting

BSCS will ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the changes to the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which criminalise the act of 'upskirting'. The Criminal

Prosecution Service (CPS) defines 'upskirting' as: "a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person's clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission. It is not only confined to victims wearing skirts or dresses and equally applies when men or women are wearing kilts, cassocks, shorts or trousers. It is often performed in crowded public places, for example on public transport or at music festivals, which can make it difficult to notice offenders."

Incidents of upskirting will not be tolerated. BSCS will make decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as school, children's social care and the police as required.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

BSCS will act in accordance with guidance endorsed by DfE Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident

All incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes will be dealt with as safeguarding concerns. The primary concern at all times will be the welfare and protection of the young people involved.

Young people who share nudes and semi-nudes of themselves or their peers are breaking the law. However, as highlighted in national guidance, it is important to avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily. BSCS will therefore work in partnership with external agencies with a view to responding proportionately to the circumstances of any incident.

All incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes should be reported to the DSL as with all other safeguarding issues and concerns. Staff will not make their own judgements

about whether an issue relating to sharing nudes and semi-nudes is more or less serious enough to warrant a report to the DSL. What may seem like less serious concerns to individual members of staff may be more significant when considered in the light of other information known to the DSL, which the member of staff may not be aware of.

If staff become concerned about a sharing nudes and semi-nudes issue in relation to a device in the possession of a student (e.g. specialist equipment, mobile phone, tablet, digital camera), the member of staff will secure the device (it should be confiscated). This is consistent with DfE advice “Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies” (DfE January 2018), page 11 ‘After the search’.

Staff will not look at, share or print any indecent images. The confiscated device will be passed immediately to the DSL (see ‘Viewing the imagery’ below).

The DSL will discuss the concerns with appropriate staff and speak to young people involved as appropriate. Parents and carers 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.

If, at any point in the process, there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to SPA and/or the police immediately.

The police will always be informed when there is reason to believe that indecent images involve sexual acts and any child in the imagery is under 13 years of age.

The DSL will make a judgement about whether a reported sharing nudes and semi-nudes incident is experimental or aggravated. Aggravated incidents involve criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of sexual images created by young people. These include possible adult involvement or criminal or abusive behaviour by young people such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts, or creation, sending or showing of images without the knowledge or against the will of a young person who is pictured.

Aggravated incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes will be referred to AfC’s Single Point of Access for advice about whether or not a response by the police and/or children’s social care is required.

This will facilitate consideration of whether:

- there are any offences that warrant a police investigation
- child protection procedures need to be invoked
- parents and carers require support in order to safeguard their children
- any of the perpetrators and/or victims require additional support, this may require the initiation of an early help assessment and the offer of early help services.

Examples of aggravated incidents include:

- evidence of adult involvement in acquiring, creating or disseminating indecent images of young people (possibly by an adult pretending to be a young person known to the victim)
- evidence of coercing, intimidating, bullying, threatening and/or extortion of students by one or more other students to create and share indecent images of themselves
- pressure applied to a number of students (e.g. all female students in a class or year group) to create and share indecent images of themselves
- pressurising a student who does not have the capacity to consent (e.g. due to their age, level of understanding or special educational needs) or with additional vulnerability to create and share indecent images of themselves
- dissemination of indecent images of young people to a significant number of others with an intention to cause harm or distress (possibly as an act of so-called 'revenge porn', bullying or exploitation)
- what is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts that are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent
- sharing of indecent images places a young person at immediate risk of harm, for example the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

The DSL will make a judgement about whether or not a situation in which nudes and semi-nudes have been shared with a small number of others in a known friendship group with no previous concerns constitutes an aggravated incident or whether the school is able to contain the situation in partnership with all parents of the students involved, arrange for the parents to ensure that all indecent images are deleted and that the young people involved learn from the incident in order to keep themselves safe in future.

In the latter instance, the DSL will consult with the police and the SPA to check that no other relevant information is held by those agencies and to ensure an agreed response is documented before proceeding.

Viewing the imagery

Adults should not view nudes and semi-nudes unless there is a good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible, the DSL's responses to incidents will be based on what they have been told about the content of the imagery.

Any decision to view imagery will be based on the DSL's professional judgement. Imagery will never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to a pupil.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL will be satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)
- is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report
- is unavoidable because a young person has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on a school device or network.

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

- never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal
- discuss the decision with the headteacher
- ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or deputy DSL with delegated authority from the head of service
- ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the head of service, another DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The other staff member does not need to view the images
- wherever possible ensure viewing takes place on school premises, ideally in the headteacher's or DSL's office
- ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery
- record the viewing of the imagery in the pupil's safeguarding record, including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions; and ensure this is signed and dated and meets the wider standards set out by Ofsted for recording safeguarding incidents.

Deletion of images

If the school has decided that other agencies do not need to be involved, then consideration will be given to deleting imagery from devices and online services to limit any further sharing of the imagery.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber-dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- denial of service (DoS or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources

- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offences, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a pupil in this area, the DSL (or a deputy) will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as online bullying or general online safety.

Online safety

BSCS has a whole service approach to online safety, which protects and educates pupils and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

Online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and is considered when planning the curriculum in all subjects.

Children and young people commonly use electronic equipment including specialist equipment, mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat, Instagram and gaming platforms.

Those technologies and the internet are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. Unfortunately, however, some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm children. That harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access those sites in school. Many pupils own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

BSCS's online safety policy explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. BSCS follows the DfE guidance regarding teaching online safety in schools (2019)

Online bullying and sharing nudes and semi-nudes by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures (see 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes' below).

AI, filtering and monitoring

BSCS refers to the guidance on generative AI: product safety expectations and Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges to use AI safely and to help us understand the filtering and monitoring requirements around AI.

So-called 'honour based' abuse

So-called 'honour based' abuse (HBA) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Crimes include female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and harmful practices such as breast ironing.

Honour based abuse might be committed against young people in our school who

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- want to avoid an arranged marriage
- want to avoid a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour in or justification for abusing the human rights of others. Staff at BSCS will record and report any concerns about a child who might be at risk of HBA to the DSL as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will consider the need to make a referral to the police and/or the SPA as with any other child protection concern and may also contact the forced marriage unit for advice as necessary.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse. It is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons or other injury to the female genital organs. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. The practice, which is most commonly carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators.

These risk indicators may include:

- pupil talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- family taking a long trip abroad
- pupil's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani)
- knowledge that the pupil's sibling has undergone FGM
- pupil talking about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff will be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer holiday period. Staff are aware that it is also possible for these procedures to be undertaken in the UK.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

(See Female Genital Mutilation Statutory Guidance for further information)

If staff have a concern that a girl may be at risk of FGM, they will record their concern and inform the DSL as they would any other safeguarding concern.

Signs that may indicate a pupil has undergone FGM:

- prolonged absence from school and other activities
- behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- bladder or menstrual problems
- finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- complaining about pain between the legs
- mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- reluctance to take part in physical activity
- repeated urinary tract infection
- disclosure

Teachers are subject to a statutory duty defined by Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) to report to the police personally where they discover (e.g. by means of a disclosure) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18. This is known as mandatory reporting.

The mandatory reporting duty applies to all persons in name of school who are employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report to the police.

In BSCS, teachers in this situation will record their concerns on the Cause for Concern form and inform the DSL, who will support the teacher in making a direct report to the police.

There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff will examine a girl.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. BSCS staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to England.

Since June 2014, forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

School staff will never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact will be made with the Single Point of Access.

Child trafficking and modern slavery

Human trafficking is defined in the UN Protocol on trafficking, adopted in 2000, as the acquisition of a person, by means of deception or coercion, for the purposes of exploitation. Human trafficking, or modern slavery as it is often referred to, is a crime and a safeguarding issue affecting millions across the world and in the United Kingdom.

Staff at BSCS are alert to the existence of modern slavery and child trafficking and concerns will be recorded and reported to SPA as appropriate.

Types of Modern Slavery

Examples of industries and services where slavery exist in the UK today, the victims of which include children and young people are (with examples)

- the sex industry, including brothels

- retail: nail bars, hand car washes
- factories: food packing
- hospitality: fast-food outlets
- agriculture: fruit picking
- domestic labour: cooking, cleaning and childminding
- In addition, victims can be forced into criminal activities such as cannabis production, theft or begging.

Modern slavery is an issue that transcends age, gender and ethnicities. It can include victims that have been brought to the UK from overseas or vulnerable people in the UK being forced illegally to work against their will. Children and young people have an increased vulnerability to slavery.

Poverty, limited opportunities at home, lack of education, unstable social and political conditions and war are some of the situations that contribute to trafficking of victims and slavery.

Slavery can be linked to a number of safeguarding issues, including child sexual exploitation, but normally includes at least one of the following specific situations.

- Child trafficking: young people being moved internationally or domestically so that they can be exploited.
- Forced labour: victims are forced to work through physical or mental threat, against their will, often for very long hours for little or no pay, in conditions that can affect their physical and mental health. They are often subjected to verbal or physical threats of violence against them as individuals or their families.
- Debt bondage: victims forced to work to pay off debts that they will never be able to. Debts can be passed down to children. Extreme examples include where a victim may be owned or controlled by an 'employer' or sold as a commodity.

Possible signs and indicators that someone is a victim of modern slavery that anyone working with children and young people should be aware of include:

- physical appearance: poor physical condition, malnourishment, untreated injuries and looking neglected
- isolation: victims may not be allowed out on their own and may appear to be under the control or influence of people accompanying them, with the absence of a parent or legal guardian. They may not interact and be unfamiliar in their local community
- poor living conditions: victims may be living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation, with multiple children living and working at the same address or premises
- personal belongings: few possessions, wearing the same clothes each day and no identification documents

- restricted freedom: victims have little opportunity to move freely and may be kept from having access to their passport
- unusual travel times: victims may be dropped off or collected from work on a regular basis either very early or late at night
- reluctant to seek help: victims may avoid eye contact, appear frightened or hesitant to approach people and have lack of trust or concern about making a report should they be deportation or fear of violence on their family

If a member of BSCS staff suspects that a pupil may be a victim they will, in the first instance, report their concerns to the DSL. The DSL will seek advice and support from SPA who may in turn make a referral to the National Crime Agency via the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Private fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. Close relatives are defined as step parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled.

Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

BSCS recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When BSCS becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, we will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care themselves in the first instance, but also alert them to our mandatory duty as a school to inform the local authority of children in such arrangements.

Radicalisation and extremism

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of name of school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services ('specified authorities') to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values.

BSCS seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to far right/neo-Nazi/white supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist animal rights movements.

Even very young children have been exposed, in rare circumstances, to extremism at home and elsewhere including online.

As children get older, they look for adventure and excitement and they may start to ask questions about their identity and belonging. During this stage of their development they are vulnerable to extremist groups that may claim to offer answers, identity and a social network apparently providing a sense of belonging. Many of those extremist groups make sophisticated use of the internet and social media to target young people and spread their ideology, making young people more vulnerable to being influenced by extremist ideas.

BSCSI takes seriously our responsibility to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. Name of school is committed to preventing pupils from being radicalised and drawn into any form of extremism or terrorism. Name of school promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by providing pupils with opportunities through the curriculum to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and learn how to discuss and debate points of view; and by ensuring that all pupils are valued and listened to.

BSCS staff receive training that provides them with both the information they need to understand the risks affecting children and young people in this area and a specific understanding of how to identify and support individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation. Staff are trained to report all concerns about possible radicalisation and extremism to the DSL immediately as they would any other safeguarding concern.

BSCS recognises the importance of providing a safe space for children to discuss controversial issues and build the resilience and critical thinking skills needed to challenge extremist perspectives.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they will speak with the DSL.

BSCS will discuss any concerns about possible radicalisation identified with a pupil's parents and carers as with any other safeguarding or child protection issue unless there is reason to believe that doing so would place the child at risk. They will also support parents and carers who raise concerns about their children being vulnerable to radicalisation.

We will then follow normal safeguarding procedures, which may involve contacting the Single Point of Access for consultation and further advice and/or making appropriate referrals to the police PREVENT team and Channel programme for any pupil whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are vulnerable to being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

The Department for Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

Suicide and self-harm

Suicide: an act of deliberate self-harm which results in death.

Self-harm: self-poisoning or self-injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose of the act.

Suicide and self-harm links: self-harm is generally a way of coping with overwhelming emotional distress. Many young people self-harm where there is no suicidal intent. However, research shows that young people who self-harm can be at a higher risk of suicide.

Self-harm is a coping mechanism that enables a person to express difficult emotions. Young people who hurt themselves often feel that physical pain is easier to deal with than the emotional pain they are experiencing, because it is tangible. But the behaviour only provides temporary relief and fails to deal with the underlying issues that a young person is facing. For some people, self-harm may last for a short time. For others, it can become a long-term problem. Some people self-harm, stop for a while, and return to it months, even years, later, in times of distress.

Risk factors that indicate a child or young person may be at risk of taking actions to harm themselves or attempt suicide can cover a wide range of life events such as bereavement; bullying; online bullying; mental health problems including eating disorders; family problems such as domestic violence; or any form of abuse or conflict between the child and parents.

The most common forms of self-harm are

- cutting
- biting self
- burning, scalding, branding
- picking at skin, reopening old wounds

- breaking bones, punching
- hair pulling
- head banging
- ingesting objects or toxic substances
- overdosing with a medicine

Self-harm is usually a secretive behaviour but signs may include:

- wearing long sleeves at inappropriate times
- spending more time in the bathroom
- unexplained cuts or bruises, burns or other injuries
- unexplained smell of Dettol, TCP, etc.
- low mood - seems to be depressed or unhappy, low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness
- any mood changes - anger, sadness
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- losing friendships, spending more time by themselves and becoming more private or defensive
- withdrawal from activities that used to be enjoyed
- abuse of alcohol and/or drugs

BSCS recognises that any pupil who self-harms or expresses thoughts about self-harm and/or suicide must be taken seriously and appropriate help and intervention will be offered at the earliest point. Any member of staff who is made aware that a pupil has self-harmed, or is contemplating self-harm or suicide, will record and report the matter to the DSL as soon as possible as with any other safeguarding concern.

A safety plan will be developed for any pupil at risk of suicide.

Fabricated or induced illnesses

Staff at BSCS are alert to the issues surrounding fabricated or induced illnesses. Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It happens when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.

There are many ways that the parent/carer may fabricate (make up or lie about) or induce illness in a child:

- lying about their child's symptoms

- deliberately contaminating or manipulating clinical tests to fake evidence of illness. For example, by adding blood or glucose to urine samples, placing their blood on the child's clothing to suggest unusual bleeding, or heating thermometers to suggest the presence of a fever
- poisoning their child with unsuitable and non-prescribed medicine
- infecting their child's wounds or injecting the child with dirt or poo
- inducing unconsciousness by suffocating their child
- not treating or mistreating genuine conditions so they get worse
- withholding food, resulting in the child failing to develop physically and mentally at the expected rate.

The very presence of an illness can act as a stimulus to the abnormal behaviour and also provide the parent with opportunities for inducing symptoms.

Fabricated or induced illness is most commonly identified in younger children. Although some of these children die, there are many that do not die as a result of having their illness fabricated or induced, but who suffer significant long term physical or psychological health consequences.

Fabrication of illness may not necessarily result in a child experiencing physical harm, but there may be concerns about the child suffering emotional harm. They may suffer emotional harm and/or disturbed family relationships as a result of an abnormal relationship with their parent.

Staff at BSCS will record and report any concerns about a child who might be experiencing fabricated or induced illness to the DSL as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will consider the need to make a referral or consult with the Single Point of Access as with any other child protection concern.

Appendix B

The Seven Rs

Receive

Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is said and take it seriously. Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable.

Reassure

Reassure the pupil /student, but only as far as is honest and reliable. Do not make promises you may not be able to keep, e.g.: “I’ll stay with you”, or “everything will be alright now” or “I’ll keep this confidential”. Do reassure, e.g. you could say “I believe you”, “I am glad you came to me”, “I am sorry this has happened”, “we are going to do something together to get help”.

Respond

Respond to the pupil/student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details.

Do not ask ‘leading’ questions, i.e. “did he touch your private parts?” or “did she hurt you?”. Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later court proceedings.

Instead, make use of open ended questions which offers the child the opportunity to provide more information about an event in a way that is not leading, suggestive or putting them under pressure. Open questions may use: How? When? Who? Where?

Questions beginning with the phrases “tell me”, “describe” or “explain” are useful:

- Tell me what happened, tell me who was there....
- Explain what you mean when you say....
- Describe the place to me....
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be the designated lead for safeguarding or Headteacher.

Report

Share concerns with the DSL as soon as possible. If you are unable to contact your DSL, deputy DSL, or most senior member of staff, if the child is at risk of immediate harm, you MUST contact Achieving for Children SPA service or Police.

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the DSL or children’s social work, you should ask for the decision to be reconsidered, giving your reasons for this.

A formal referral or any urgent medical treatment must not be delayed by the unavailability of designated staff.

Record

If possible, make some very brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible. Keep your original notes on file.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make a written record as soon as practical, recording the disclosure using the child's own words, what was said or seen and the location both of the abuse and the disclosure.

Record the date, time, place, person's present and noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into proper words.

A record of a concern, suspicion or allegation should be made at the time of or as soon as possible after the event. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made.

Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'.

A record should be made of any visible marks, bruising or injuries to a child that give cause for concern. This may be completed on a body map. (See Appendix 3). The child should not be examined intimately or pictures taken of any injuries / marks.

All records must be signed and dated clearly with the name of the signatory clearly printed. Children **MUST NOT** be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records. All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) are passed to the DSL.

Remember

Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available. Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues.

Try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

Review

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure?
- Have these been remedied? Is further training required?

Appendix C

Links

Children Act 1989 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-care-planning-placement-and-case-review

Children Act 2004: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents

Education Act 2002: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills>

Teachers' Standards: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2

Information Sharing:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage:

https://d.docs.live.net/9b48153fdb534d79/Documents/AfC%20Work/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Statutory guidance for alternative provision:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>

Engaging Neglectful Parents from Affluent Backgrounds:

<https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/departments/social-therapeutic-and-comms-studies/Report---Neglect-in-Affluent-Families-1-December-2017.pdf>

RBWM Multi-agency Threshold Document:

https://rbwmsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/assets/1/multi_agency_threshold_guidance_february_2016.pdf

ACEs video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHgLYI9KZ-A>

Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance:

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

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/>

Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Kooth: <https://www.kooth.com/>

Domestic Abuse Act 2021: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Local Guidance:

<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/education/education-welfare-service-ews>

https://berks.proceduresonline.com/west_berk/p_ch_missing_educ.html

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE September 2021):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

Beyond Referrals Toolkit:

https://www.csnetwork.org.uk/assets/documents/CSN_BeyondReferrals_SchoolsGuidance_ARTWORK.pdf

When to call the police:

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

Stop it Now:

<https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child-or-young-persons-sexual-behaviour/preventing-harmful-sexual-behaviour/>

Beyond Referrals:

<https://www.csnetwork.org.uk/en/beyond-referrals-levers-for-addressing-harmful-sexual-behaviour-in-schools>

Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and Guide:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners

Cyber Choices:

<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices>

National Cyber Security Centre: [National Cyber Security Centre](#)

Preventing youth violence and gang involvement:

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

Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines:

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

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-how-to-respond-to-an-incident-overview>

Searching, Screening and Confiscation:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/554415/searching_screening_confiscation_advice_Sept_2016.pdf

Female Genital Mutilation Statutory Guidance:

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

Guidance Forced Marriage: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage

Asian Women's Resource Centre: <https://www.asianwomenscentre.org.uk/>

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims>

Looking After Someone Else's Child: www.gov.uk/looking-after-someone-elses-child

Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty

Educate Against Hate: [Educate against hate](#)

Papyrus: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/suicide-prevention/>

RCPCH updated guidance on fabricated or induced illness:

<https://childprotection.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/perplexing-presentations-and-fii/>

Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269764/role_and_responsibilities_of_the_designated_teacher_for_looked_after_children.pdf

AfC Virtual School: <https://www.afcvirtuelschool.org.uk/>

Early Help Assessment:

<https://rbwmsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/p/safeguarding-children/early-help-and-intervention>

Guidance for Safer Working Practice:

Contextual Safeguarding:

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

RBWM threshold doc:

https://rbwmsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/assets/1/multi_agency_threshold_guidance_february_2016.pdf

Child Missing Education:

<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/education/education-welfare-service-ews>

Early Help:

<https://rbwmsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/p/safeguarding-children/early-help-and-intervention>

Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines:

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

Teaching Online Safety:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

Children who run away or go missing from home or care:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

NSPCC Responding to a child's disclosure of abuse:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvJ5uBIGYgE>

SPA referral form:

<https://rbwmsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/p/safeguarding-children/concerned-about-a-child>

Guidance for safer working practice 2019:

<https://d.docs.live.net/9b48153fdb534d79/Documents/AfC%20Work/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2021-caspar-briefing.pdf>

Guidance for safer working practice addendum April 2020:

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guidance-For-Safer-Working-Practice-COVID-addendum-April-2020.pdf>

Manor Green physical intervention training:

<https://www.manorgreenschool.co.uk/training-and-services/team-teach>

Price training: <https://www.pricetraining.co.uk/your-sector/schools-education/>

Positive environments where children can flourish:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/positive-environments-where-children-can-flourish/positive-environments-where-children-can-flourish>

Use of reasonable force:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>