

**St Cuthbert's
Catholic High School**

Live life in all its fullness

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (including PREVENT)

2018 - 2019

Person responsible for Policy:	Assistant Headteacher (PDBW)/Senior Leadership Team
Committee responsible for Policy:	Curriculum & Outcomes
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1. Policy statement and principals

This policy is statutory.

The school's safeguarding arrangements are inspected by Ofsted under the judgements for behaviour and safety, and leadership and management.

This policy has been reviewed in light of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018' guidance from the Department for Education.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- policies will be reviewed annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the St Helens Safeguarding Children Board Procedures.

Policy principles

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- There is a culture of transparency, openness and, if needed, challenge with regards to maintaining high standards in Safeguarding.
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.

Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to students, parents and other partners
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding procedures.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of 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. It can also include issues such as health and safety, use of reasonable force, meeting the needs of students with medical conditions, providing first aid, educational visits, and site security – taking into account local context, e-safety and intimate care.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

2. Safeguarding legislation and guidance

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

- The Teacher Standards 2012 state that teachers, including head teachers should be safeguarding children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- The statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguarding Children \(July 2018\)](#) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB's) to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.
- The statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\)](#) is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended by SI 2012/2962) and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and student referral units. **All staff should read Part One of this guidance. All staff can access a copy of this guidance in the Safeguarding area of school. Please see Justin McAuley and Danielle Anderson for further guidance.**
- Research suggests that between 6-19% of school aged children will suffer severe maltreatment, and disabled children are three times more likely to be abused. Due to their day-to-day contact with students, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures

for reporting their concerns. The school will act on identified concerns and provide early help to prevent concerns from escalating.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Key personnel

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection (member of senior management) is:

Mr Justin McAuley

Contact details: email: Justin.mcauley@stcuthberts.com Tel: 01744 678123 ext 104

The deputy DSL is: Ms Danielle Anderson (Senior Pastoral Lead for Safeguarding)

Contact details: email: Danielle.anderson@stcuthberts.com Tel: 01744 678123

The nominated child protection governor is: Mrs Cathryn McKeagney

Contact details: Cathryn.mckeagney@stcuthberts.com Tel: 01744 678123

The head teacher is: Mrs Catherine Twist

Contact details: email: Catherine.twist@stcuthberts.com Tel: 01744 678123 ext 107

The school will ensure there is a member of the senior leadership team in the DSL role and that appropriate cover is provided if they are unavailable.

The DSL:

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with updates every two years
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of LSCB procedures
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the student's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a student with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the student's social worker is informed
- where children leave the school, ensures the child protection file is copied for any new school as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main student file
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences

- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSCB
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is regularly reviewed and updated annually
- liaises with the nominated governor and head teacher as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- works with the head teacher to ensure cases concerning a member of staff are referred appropriately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The deputy DSL(s) is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated lead, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated lead, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The governing body ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures, that are consistent with LSCB and statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and ensures recording of this.
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head teacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements on induction and appropriate child protection training, which is regularly updated in line with any requirements of the LSCB. The DSL receives refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- ensures that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection
- ensures that the school contributes to inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how students may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures are in accordance with the LSCB and national guidance.

An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

The Head teacher:

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that students are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- liaises with the Local Authority Designated Officer where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

4. Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all students with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving students in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among students including challenging inappropriate or discriminatory language or behaviour.
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in students' behaviour and to signs of abuse and neglect
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- avoiding favouring students over others.
- avoiding any behaviour which could lead to suspicions of anything other than a professional relationships with students.
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, appropriate IT use.
- asking the student's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language, even in joke.
- being clear on professional boundaries and conduct with other staff when students present.
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and LSCB procedures
- referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care

- following the school's rules with regard to communication with students and use of social media and online networking
- avoiding unnecessary time alone with students and risk manage any time alone or 1:1 working.
- avoiding sharing excessive personal information with students.

5. Abuse of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent.

Refer to the safer work practise guidance document issued each September.

6. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- affected by mental health issues
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying including cyber, homophobic, racist etc.
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- missing education
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- vulnerability to extremism or radicalisation.

- involved directly or indirectly in sexual exploitation or trafficking
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.

7. Specific Safeguarding Issues

- Peer on Peer abuse – [See Appendix 2](#)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Mental health
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

The lists above in point 6 and 7 provides examples of vulnerable groups but these lists are not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

8. Missing children

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and follow procedures, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions.

9. Helping children to keep themselves safe

Children are taught to understand relationships and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) Sex and Relationships (SRE) education lessons in Active Form Time and in all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and have help to work out how those risks might be overcome. Discussions about relationships and risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety and tackling bullying procedures including the legalities and consequences. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children, and students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any worries they may have. However all our

students are aware that if they disclose that they are being harmed or that they have, or intend, to harm another that this cannot be kept secret and that information will need to be shared.

10. Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support students, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person (DSL) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- maintaining and storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

11. Complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student, belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the head teacher and governors. A copy of the schools complaints procedure is available on request from the Head teachers PA.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

12. If you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's **whistleblowing code** enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the head teacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

13. Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the head teacher. Allegations against the head teacher should be reported to the chair of governors. Staff may also report their concerns directly to police or children's social care if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2018\)](#).

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. We will communicate this to all parties.

14. Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. All staff will be regularly trained in Safeguarding. New staff are expected to complete safeguarding training during the initial days of their induction period.

New staff and governors will receive an explanation during their induction which includes the school's child protection policy, reporting and recording arrangements, the staff code of conduct and details for the DSL. All staff, including the head teacher (unless the head teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's **Visiting Staff Leaflet**. This leaflet is available at the school reception.

15. Safer recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\)](#) together with the LSCB and the school's individual procedures, including keeping an up to date Single Central Register.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children

- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role
- provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed.

The school will also verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies that agency staff have been appropriately checked.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with students.

Supervised volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks where appropriate.

16. Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The head teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

17. Extended school and off-site arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures and clarify whose procedure is to be followed with the DSL kept informed appropriately.

When our students attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place and clarify who's procedures are to be followed, insuring the DSL is kept appropriately informed.

If alternative providers are used we will ensure they have effective safeguarding in place, ensuring the DSL is kept appropriately informed.

18. Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs 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 students we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the student's first name with an image
- ensure students are appropriately dressed
- encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

19. e-Safety

Our students increasingly use mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive communications, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The school's **e-safety policy** explains how we aim to keep students safe in school. Cyber-bullying and sexting by students, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and in the absence of a child protection concern will be managed through our anti-bullying and confiscation procedures.

Chat-rooms and some social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and students are not allowed to access these sites in school. Some students will undoubtedly be 'chatting' outside school and are informed of the risks of this through PSHE/. Parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using social media. A lot of E-safety guidance is available on the school website.

Staff regularly receive practical advice towards acceptable and professional use regarding the use of social networking and electronic communication with extra focus where students and parents may be involved. The staff are made aware of the boundaries within the 'Safer Working Practise' guidance document. They are also made aware of our e-safety and social media policies. Staff also have easy access to their own e-safety information and guidance on the school website.

20. Child protection procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

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.(e.g. via the internet) .They may be abused by an adult or adults , or another child or children.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people. There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse Physical abuse is 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. (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. 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, 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.

Position of Trust

The age of consent for sexual activity is 18 years old unless you are in a position of trust over that child.

Sexual Offences Act 2003

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); or
- 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, 2015).

Bullying While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. All students and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the tackling bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the head teacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

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 these 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.

Child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber-bullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse ([Keeping children safe in education 2018](#)). All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There are a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 11- 12 of the Multi Agency Practice Guidelines. Some indicators include:

- A girl or woman may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- A girl or woman may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- A girl may spend long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- A girl or woman may have frequent urinary or menstrual problems.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school or college.
- A prolonged absence from school or college with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return could be an indication that a girl has recently undergone FGM.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

It is the responsibility of staff to report and record their concerns via the school safeguarding system.

Any member of staff can make a referral if they have concerns that a child may be at risk. Referrals should be made to the DSL/DDSL using the contacts identified at the beginning of this policy.

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
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- 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 disinterested 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.

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 and record their concerns – they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

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 for 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 soon as possible 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 unnecessarily with colleagues or with friends or family.
- complete a record of concern using the school **Referral to Designated Safeguarding Lead Form**
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you are concerned about a student's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The student's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the student the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine for staff to ask the student if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the welfare concern form to record these early concerns. If the student does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the student, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

If a student discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the student know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the student this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the student may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the student may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the students it is best practice for staff to:

- allow students to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences, and allow space and time for student to continue, staff will recognise the barriers the student may have had to overcome to disclose.

- clarifying or repeating back to check what they have heard if needed but will not lead the discussion in any way or ask investigative or leading questions – such as.. whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the student's mother think about it.
- at an appropriate time tell the student that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the student what will happen next. The student may agree to go with you to see the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Otherwise let them know that you will be consulting them.
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the **Referral to Designated Safeguarding Lead Form** and hand it to the designated lead.
- seek support if they feel distressed
- Please note that any concerns relating to the 'Prevent Strategy' can be recorded on the **Referral to Designated Safeguarding Lead Form**

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care.

Records and Monitoring

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing ASAP and definitely within 24 hours. All records will provide a factual and evidence based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions. Records will be signed, dated and, where appropriate, witnessed.

At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person. The body map will be used instead in accordance with recording guidance.

A chronology of actions taken will be kept on the K Drive system. Staff, particularly pastoral staff, will record any minor concerns on the chronology and will take responsibility for alerting the designated person.

All safeguarding, child protection and welfare concerns will be recorded and kept on the secure CPoms system.

NB Files will be made available for external scrutiny for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit.

Why recording is important

Our staff will be encouraged to understand why it is important that recording is comprehensive and accurate and what the messages are from serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information.

Child Protection folder/file

The establishment of a CP file, which is separate from the child's main school file, is an important principle in terms of storing and collating information about children which relates to either a child protection or safeguarding concern or an accumulation of concerns about a child's welfare which are outside of the usual range of concerns which relate to ordinary life events. It needs to be borne in mind that what constitutes a 'concern' for one child may not be a 'concern' for another and the particular child's circumstances and needs will differ ie a child subject to a child protection plan, looked after child, FAM may be looked at differently to a child recently bereaved, parental health issues etc. Professional judgement will therefore be an important factor when making this decision and will need clear links between pastoral staff and designated safeguarding leads in school.

A CP confidential file will be commenced in the event of:

A staff member alerting colleagues to a concern regarding a child

A referral to social care direct.

A number of minor concerns on the child's main school file.

Any child open to social care.

The school will keep written records of concern about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to external agencies immediately.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect.

The concern file can be active or non-active in terms of monitoring i.e. a child is no longer CLA, subject to a child protection plan and this level of activity can be recorded on the front sheet as a start and end date. If future concerns then arise it can be re-activated and indicated as such on the front sheet and on the chronology as new information arises.

If the child moves to another school, the concern file will be securely sent or taken, as part of the admission/transition arrangements, to the DSL at the new establishment/school. There will be a timely liaison between each school DSL for Safeguarding to ensure a smooth and safe transition for the child.

Recording Practice

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child.

A recording of each and every episode/incident/concern/activity regarding that child, including telephone calls to other professionals, needs to be recorded on the chronology kept within the confidential file for that child. This will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child. Actions will be agreed and roles and responsibility of each agency will be clarified and outcomes recorded. The chronology will be brief and log activity; the full recording will be on the record of concern.

More detailed recording on the record of concern will be signed and dated and include an analysis, taking account of the holistic needs of the child, and any historical information held on the child's file. Support and advice will be sought from social care, or early help whenever necessary. In this way a picture can emerge and this will assist in promoting an evidence based assessment and determining any action(s) that needs to be taken. This may include no further action, whether a CAF should be undertaken, or whether a referral should be made to Children's Social Care in line with the Continuum of Need document.

Such robust practice across child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will assist the school in the early identification of any concerns which may prevent future harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm (through the concern file and through an on-going dialogue with pastoral staff). They will ensure that we contribute to assessments of need and support multi-agency plans for those children.

Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a student's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 40 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who may become concerned about a student's sexual behaviour should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

Sexual exploitation of children

As mentioned previously, sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking. All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the student and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Keeping Children Safe in Education states that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child. This should be then be shared with the DSL so that an overview is kept.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles.

All information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the head teacher or DSL.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. Ideally information sharing will be done in writing so that there is an evidence trail however there may be occasions in Child Protection proceedings where this method is too slow. In cases where agencies ring the school requesting information reception staff will take a message and inform the DSL *immediately*, the DSL will ensure they can identify who is requesting the information before sharing and then record what has been shared, when, why and with whom.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and students on request.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputy, and the head teacher are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Staff will record any referral made.

Related safeguarding policies:

- Staff code of conduct
- Positive handling
- Behaviour
- Complaints procedure
- Whistleblowing
- SEN
- Safer recruitment
- Managing allegations
- Grievance and disciplinary

21. Special Circumstances

Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise students on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

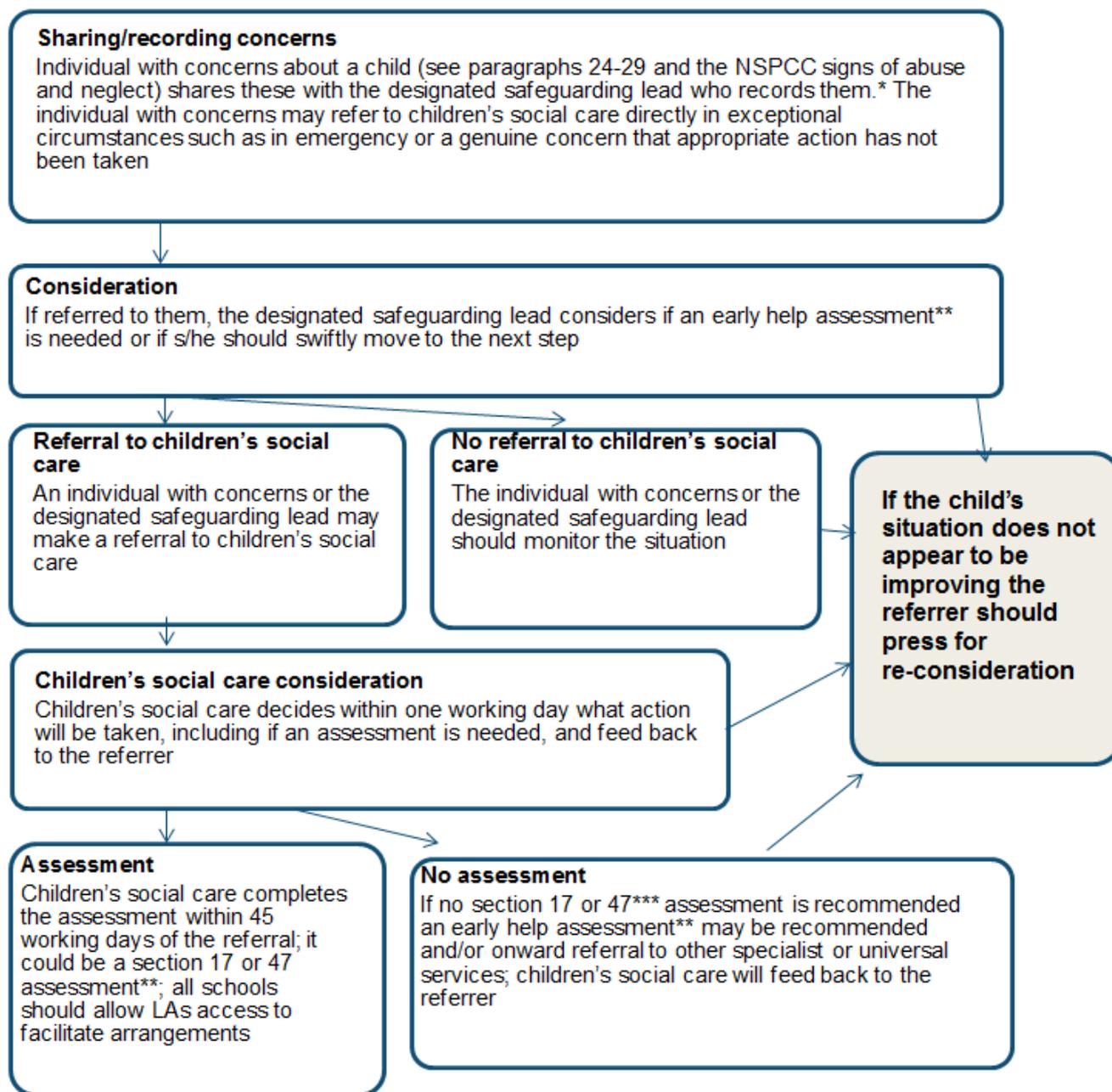
Children staying with host families

The school may make arrangements for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, Annex C to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas students may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

Action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm

This diagram illustrates what action should be taken and who should take it where there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. **Anybody can make a referral.** *In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against the staff member, see part four of this guidance which explains action the school or college should take in respect of the staff member.



** Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs coordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

** Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need). Where there are child protection concerns local authority services must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, see Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) for more information

Appendix 1

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION - August 2015 – [The Prevent duty: for schools and childcare providers](#) with toolkits updated September 2018

Safeguarding Students from Extremism and Radicalisation

As a school we have a vital role in protecting students from the risks of extremism and radicalisation.

This role is underpinned by the new duty in the counter – Terrorism and Security Act 2015 “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (“The Prevent duty”).

School and colleges form partners of the channel panels with the local authority and police.

Panels will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Prevent lead within school: PC Mark Pender

Police Link Person: PC Mark Pender

Safeguarding Governor: Cathryn McKeagney

Advice on how to keep your child safe

“Prevent Tragedies” <http://www.preventtragedies.co.uk>

“Families Matter” <http://www.familiesmatter.org.uk>

For staff and governors wishing to raise a concern relating to extremism DDCEG (Due Diligence and Counter Extremism Group) the helpline is: 020 7340 7264.

Initial Inclusion Team Awareness training 7th May 2015 – PC Marsh

Staff Training on PREVENT – completed on 11th September 2015 by Declan Sammin and Heather Moon and updated November 2017 as part of Safeguarding Training to all staff.

Prevent Duty Guidance – Appendix to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2018-19

In response to the new government changes from 1st July 2015, St Cuthbert's Catholic High School has included an additional section to the current Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This is a direct response to the growing concern of radicalisation and extremism in Britain. When writing this appendix, consideration and reference has been made to Local Authority guidance/Prevent Duty Guidance and Social Media Guidance. The PREVENT response will be included in all new safeguarding policy and practice at St Cuthbert's Catholic High School. Additional information can be further accessed by using the [St Helens LSCB website](#) – Prevent Duty Guidance.

As of 1st July 2015, schools are required to play their role in tackling radicalisation and extremism. Schools must provide information and act if they are concerned about these issues.

In response, to the whole staff at St Cuthbert's Catholic High School have received PREVENT training from Merseyside Policy on Wednesday 9th September 2015 to allow all members of staff to gain access to the information and how schools can respond if required to do so. Awareness and school actions to be raised with families and carers throughout the oncoming school year.

The school action is as follows if there is a concern:

Step 1

**CONCERN or
ISSUE in school.**



Step 2

**INFORMATION SHARED
with Safeguarding Team at
St Cuthbert's**



Step 3

**INFORMATION /CONCERN
SHARED with Local
Authority via LA referral
System**

Step 4

**FEED BACK to
staff when
LA respond to
referral**



The Prevent Strategy

What is your Prevent Duty?

Complying with the Prevent duty includes promoting and exemplifying British values: democracy; rule of law; individual liberty; tolerance and mutual respect; respecting different faiths and beliefs. This includes complying with the Equality Act 2010 and preventing discrimination against those with protected characteristics, such as: age, disability; gender reassignment; marriage; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. All staff have a responsibility to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. All staff must attend safeguarding training and Prevent duty training as identified or provided by School. All staff are expected to uphold and embed the values within the Equality Act 2010 at all times. Staff should use this document in line with other policies and guidelines such as: Safeguarding policy; Anti Bullying, hate and harassment policy; Keeping Children safe in Education document; Anti-terrorism act 2015. All staff should use relevant opportunities to promote British values. Such training will provide staff with:

Knowledge to identify children at risk of being drawn in to terrorism or extremism

Skills to challenge extremist ideology

Awareness of how to refer children for further help and support and respond to risks

How can you identify risks or concerns?

Identification of concerns may include the following, although the list is not exhaustive:

- Expression of views which are discriminately against protected groups or individuals
- Third party reports of concerns about behaviour e.g. Plans to travel abroad, extremist activities
- Evidence of discriminate treatment of groups or individuals
- Evidence of bullying/hate/harassment
- Possessing or accessing extremist materials
- Expression of extremist views including via social media
- Use of extremist language
- Threats of violence/ acts of terrorism

What should you do if you have a concern?

If you have any concerns, you must always refer them to your internal Safeguarding Team, complying with the School safeguarding/ Child Protection/ anti hate Policy and procedures. The Safeguarding Team will then decide upon the appropriate course of action, which may be to seek advice by contacting non-emergency services on 101. They may decide to make a referral to external agencies such as Prevent lead, local police, Channel link or LSCB.

All staff and volunteers must report any Safeguarding and Prevent concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads, Mr Justin McAuley and Ms Danielle Anderson.

As a staff you will work closely with students and will be privy to personal information which other staff may not have access to. You should use your professional judgement to decide when concerns should be referred to the Safeguarding team.

If your professional experience gives you concerns about the behaviour of individuals then discuss this with a member of the Safeguarding team.

For further information go the Gov.uk website:

[The Prevent Duty – departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#)

Appendix 2

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. 'Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim.

Research suggests that girls and young women are more at risk of abusive behaviours perpetrated by their peers; however it can also affect boys and young men, those with learning difficulties or disabilities, LGBTQ Children and young people (CYP) and those who are from different communities.

Situations where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers or associates can be related with gang / serious youth violence activity but that is not always the case. Peer influence or peer pressure is a major factor in the decisions made by young people to join groups. Many young people see it as a "way out" from their day to day life and feel a strong bond with their peers, one which they may be lacking at home.

Definition

There is no clear definition of what peer on peer abuse entails. However it can be captured in a range of different definitions:

- **Domestic Abuse:** relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and / or financial abuse, and coercive control in their intimate relationships;
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** captures young people aged under-18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age - including another young person;
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who demonstrates behaviour outside of their normative parameters of development (this includes, but is not exclusive to abusive behaviours);
- **Serious Youth Crime / Violence:** reference to offences (as opposed to relationships / contexts) and captures all those of the most serious in nature including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18.

Peer on peer abuse can refer to any of the above individually or as a combination, therefore professionals working with CYP who are experiencing abuse from their peers must respond to the needs of each of the definitions to uncover the level of complexity and respond in the most effective manner. It is possible that a young person may be sexually exploited in a gang related situation by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

Key Areas Where Peer on Peer Abuse Occurs

Bullying (including Cyberbullying)

Bullying is defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally". Bullying often starts with trivial events and it is behaviour that hurts someone else - such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, threatening or undermining someone; mocking; making offensive comments; taking belongings; inappropriate touching; producing offensive graffiti; or always leaving someone out of groups. It can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

A child that is being bullied can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night. There are many different forms of bullying:

- **'Cyberbullying':** involves sending inappropriate or hurtful text messages, emails or instant messages, posting malicious material online (e.g. on social networking websites) or sending or posting offensive or degrading images and videos;

- **Racist and Religious Bullying:** A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
- **Sexual, Sexist and Transphobic Bullying:** includes any behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls;
- **Homophobic Bullying:** targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
- **Disablist Bullying:** targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way, or exploiting a certain aspect of the victim's disability.

It is important to remember that bullying can also be a combination of the above.

There has been much media attention surrounding children and young people who have committed suicide due to being bullied. Professionals must understand the damaging and at times fatal effects bullying can and does have on children and young people and be able to respond to it effectively.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Many of the warning signs and indicators of CSE tend to refer to adult perpetrators, e.g. associations with older boyfriends / girlfriends, relationships or associations with risky adults and / or entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults. As per the revised definition of CSE 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". The key element of CSE is the imbalance of power and control within the exploitative relationship. Many CYP are not aware of the exploitation as they have a genuine belief that they are loved by their boyfriend / girlfriend or are acting in accordance with their peers. CYP are often recruited into exploitation by those who they trust, those of a similar age and with similar hobbies, often the nature of peer on peer exploitation encompasses a sense of peer pressure and wanting to fit in. In peer on peer exploitation, schools and youth clubs are also locations where children and young people can be exploited.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Including Sexting

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people does not always occur with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse. This also includes sexting when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture may occur in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be committing a criminal offence.

Gang Activity and Youth Violence

A child or young person can be exploited (sexually and / or physically) by a gang, but this is not necessarily the reason why gangs are formed. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has defined CSE in gangs and groups as:

- **Gangs** - mainly comprising men and boys aged 13-25 years old, who take part in many forms of criminal activity (e.g. knife crime or robbery) who can engage in violence against other gangs, and who have identifiable markers, for example a territory, a name, or sometimes clothing.
- **Groups** - involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, co-ordinating and / or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organised or opportunistic way.

Types of exploitation may include using sex as a weapon between rival gangs, as a form of punishment to fellow gang members and / or a means of gaining status within the hierarchy of the gang. CYP may be forced to gain entry into the gang by carrying out an initiation process which may be harmful to them and /

or may inflict harm to others. Where abuse takes place in a gang environment, female members may perceive the abuse as normal, as well as accepting it as a way of achieving a respected status / title within the gang.

Domestic Violence

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and / or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and / or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

Actions to be Taken

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018 states

Peer on peer abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Context

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

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Professionals must give consideration to the impact on the school environment when both the perpetrator and victim attend the same school.

It is vital for professionals to understand that the child who is perpetrating the abuse may also be at risk of harm. Professionals should make every effort to ensure that the perpetrator is also treated as a victim and undertake assessments to conclude this. Sensitive work must be undertaken with the child who is perpetrating, by helping them to understand the nature of their behaviour and the effect it has on others may prevent the abuse as a whole.

Professionals should make every effort to understand the environmental context of the child's life when assessing the risk posed to the child or young person. Individual experiences do not necessarily cause the abuse the victim is experiencing, but this may be used by perpetrators who have power and control over them. Those who are working with CYP must be able to use their professional judgement in identifying when what may be perceived as “normal developmental childhood behaviour” becomes abusive, dangerous and harmful to others.