

Refreshing Minds

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Contents page

1. Key Contact Details	
2. Policy Statement: THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IS PARAMOUNT	
3. Principles	
4. Designated Safeguarding Lead.....	
5. Duties of Staff, Governors and Volunteers	
6. Procedures for Referral/ Principles for Interventions to Protect Children.....	
7. Allegations against Staff and Volunteers	
8. Peer on peer abuse	
9. SVSH.....	
11. Supporting Children	
12. Record Keeping	
13. Children with special needs education.....	
14. Parental Involvement.....	
15. Training.....	
16. Prevent duty.....	
17. Role of the Governing Body	
18. Safeguarding in Relation to Other Policies	
19. Whistleblowing.....	
21. Online Safety.....	
22. Security.....	
23. Monitoring and Review	
24. Named Key Contacts (with their contact email addresses and telephone numbers)	
25. Key Contacts for children	
Appendix 1: The Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Appendix 2: Types of abuse and neglect	
Appendix 3: Guidance for Staff and Volunteers on suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse, and action to be taken	
Appendix 4: Peer on peer abuse policy and procedures	
Appendix 5: Dealing with Allegations against Members of Staff including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Governors or Volunteers.....	
Appendix 6:Procedures for Working with Children with Mental Health needs.....	

1. Key Contact Details

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection at Refreshing Minds is:

Name: Mrs M Landau

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Tel: 07943 411 564

2. Policy Statement: THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IS PARAMOUNT

2.1.The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (**Policy**) has regard to statutory guidance *Keeping children safe in education September 2024* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018*, *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* and *Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015*, GDPR (May 2018) information sharing 2018 and:

- Is in line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures;
- Has been authorised by the Governing Body of the;
- Is available in hard copy to parents on request;
- Can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required;

Safeguarding includes issues such as health and safety, bullying, meeting the medical needs of children with medical conditions, providing first aid, security, and child protection. Child protection refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

We aim to create an environment which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background.

We aim to do this by:

- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, peers and with other adults.
- Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Working in partnership with parents to build their understanding of the commitment to the welfare of all our children.
- Providing adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Ensuring that all parents/carers know how to complain about a staff or volunteers

The legal framework for this work is:

- ❖ The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- ❖ The Children Act 2004 as amended 2018
- ❖ Human Rights Act 1998
- ❖ Data Protection Act 1998
- ❖ GDPR 2018
- ❖ The Protection of Children Act 1999
- ❖ Section 128 of the Education Act 2002
- ❖ Education and Skills Act 2008
- ❖ Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need, and their Families' 2000
- ❖ Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners 2018.
- ❖ 'What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused' 2015.
- ❖ Voyeurism Offences Act 2020.

We introduce key elements of child protection so that children can develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.

We create a culture of value and respect for the individual.

We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and stages of our children.

Refreshing Minds takes steps to:

2.4.1 ensure we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of Staff, Governors and Volunteers (including Staff employed by another organisation) to work with children and young people in accordance with the guidance given in:

❖ *Keeping children safe in education 2024;*

❖ *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006;*

2.4.2 Ensure that where Staff from another organisation are working with our children on another site, we require written confirmation that appropriate safer recruitment checks and procedures have been completed on those Staff;

2.4.3 Follow the local inter-agency procedures of the Safeguarding Children Board;

2.4.4 Follow the local inter-agency procedures of the Safeguarding Children Board:

Hackney 020 8356 5500 - Out of hours duty team 020 8356 2710.

Haringey 020 8489 3145 - Out of hours duty team 020 8489 0000

2.4.5 Deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse and to support children who have been abused in accordance with her agreed child protection plan;

2.4.6 Design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations;

2.4.7 Understand the additional barriers that exist for children with SEND, thus ensuring that Staff is able to identify vulnerable children.

2.4.8 Be alert to the needs of children with medical conditions and operate robust and sensible health and safety and first aid procedures. The organisation takes children' mental and emotional wellbeing seriously;

2.4.9 Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, based on an understanding of the potential risk in the local area;

2.4.10 Identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified;

2.4.11 Operate appropriate behaviour and discipline procedures, including the use of reasonable force, and taking appropriate steps to manage any complex or challenging behaviour;

2.4.12 Operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;

2.4.13 Consider wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety/welfare – as referred to in **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)** and in **Keeping Children safe in Education (2024)** as **contextual safeguarding**

2.4.14 Provide a support network for all children so that they know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried about any matter.

2.4.15 Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made by children will always be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

2.4.16 The organisation recognises that it is an agent of referral and not of investigation; no action will be taken knowingly which might undermine a criminal investigation. Investigating agencies are Children's Services, Social Care and the Police.

2.5. Keeping children safe in education 2024 defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children 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.

This policy should be considered alongside the Appendix and other related policies. These are:

- Supporting children with Medical Needs
- Supporting Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing
- Behaviour Policy
- Cyber-bullying Policy

- Preventing and tackling bullying policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Health and Safety
- E-safety Policy
- Acceptable use of technology/multimedia
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistle blowing

2.6. All staff must be trained to understand our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, must have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Staff should be able to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect including (this list is not exhaustive, see below):

- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Deterioration in children's general well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- Children's comments which give cause for concern
- Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

2.7. Mobile phones should not be used at any time whilst caring for the children, except for emergencies only.

3. Principles

3.1. Refreshing Minds takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. It is committed to creating a culture of vigilance.

3.2. An agreed definition of safeguarding is: 'All agencies take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised. Where there are concerns,

all agencies take action to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies’ - Joint Chief Inspectors’ report 2002.

3.3. Promoting welfare involves ‘creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life chances in adulthood’ – ‘**Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (Government guidance 2000)**’

3.4. The Governing Body will act in accordance with ‘**Section 175 of the Education Act 2011**’ to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children.

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

- Race, religion, first language or ethnicity
- Gender or sexuality
- Age
- Health or disability
- Political or immigration status

3.6. Staff, volunteers and governors are committed to fostering an ethos which:

- Encourages and supports parents/carers and works in partnership with them;
- Listens to and values children;
- Ensures all staff and volunteers are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse, know the correct procedure for referring concerns or allegations and receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out these requirements;
- Maintains a safe environment for all children;
- Exercises their duty to work in partnership with other agencies and to share information with them in accordance with legislation (Children Act 2004)

3.7. Our recruitment and selection procedure includes checks on staff suitability to have contact with children (including Criminal Records Bureau enhanced checks) as recommended by the (EYFS) & LA and in accordance with current legislation and guidance (**Keeping Children Safe in Education - Sep 2024, the Childcare Act 2006 as amended 2018, Independent School Standards Regulations Sep 2015,**) (Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings – DfES 2006). The same recruitment procedure is to be adopted for individuals who volunteer on a regular basis.

3.8. Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made by children will always be taken seriously and acted upon promptly

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

4.1. Refreshing Minds’ Governing Body has appointed a member of Staff of the senior leadership team with the necessary status and authority to be responsible for matters relating

to child protection and welfare. Keeping children safe in education 2024 refers to this person as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead shall be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to enable her to support other Staff on safeguarding matters, to contribute to strategy discussions and / or inter-agency meetings and to contribute to the assessment of children.

4.3. Parents are welcome to approach the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have any concerns about the welfare of any child.

4.4. Recognising that Staff build expertise by undertaking safeguarding training, the Designated Safeguarding Lead shall ensure that all Staff are trained regularly, so that everyone is capable of identifying children who may benefit from early help, and providing appropriate support when a problem emerges at any point.

4.5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the SENCO to ensure that vulnerable children are identified and additional measures are put into place, and barriers are identified and overcome.

4.6. The name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are set out at the start of this Policy. The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are set out in Appendix 1.

4.8 The Designated Lead and Deputy must gain a working knowledge of national safeguarding priorities - such as those listed below. As a minimum, the DSL must have awareness as guided by KCSIE 2024 and the Annexes/links it provides:

- a. CAF (Common Assessment Framework) / Early Help assessment
- b. Contextual Safeguarding
- c. Child Sexual Exploitation
- d. Child Gambling
- e. Adolescent to Parent Violence
- f. Illegal money lending
- g. Violent Crime, including Gangs and Knife Crime
- h. Peer on Peer Abuse
- i. Communicating with children

- j. Core group
- k. Online Safety
- l. Domestic abuse
- m. Self-Harm
- n. County Lines
- o. FGM
- p. Neglect
- q. Parental mental health
- r. Parental substance use
- s. Rapid response to a child death
- t. Preventing radicalisation/WRAP workshop
- u. Equality and Diversity
- v. Honour Based Violence - Forced Marriage
- w. Serious Violence
- x. Safeguarding healthy relationships
- y. Emotional Wellbeing and positive Mental Health
- z. Safeguarding Children with SEND
- aa. Upskirting- which is a criminal offense under the Voyeurism Offences Act – April 2019.

5. Duties of Staff, Governors and Volunteers

5.1. All Staff, Governors and Volunteers of Refreshing Minds are under a general legal duty:

- To protect children from abuse.
- To be aware of the terms and procedures in this Policy and to follow them.
- To know how to access and implement the procedures in this Policy, independently if necessary.

- Ensure that there is evidence that all staff and governors have read and understood Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- To keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event in accordance with this Policy.
- To report any matters of concern in accordance with this Policy.
- **Specifically support children with social workers** who may continue to be vulnerable and be disadvantaged in attendance, behaviour and mental health.

5.2. The Governing body ensures:

- 5.3.1 That Refreshing Minds has identified a Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection.
 - 5.3.2 That the Governing body has nominated one of its members to take leadership of the organisations safeguarding arrangements on behalf of the Board and s/he will liaise with external agencies where this is required, including in the event of allegations of abuse made against staff, volunteers or a member of the Governing Body.
 - 5.3.3 That the organisations safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board in Hackney and Haringey.
 - 5.3.4 In liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the nominated Governor for Safeguarding will ensure that the organisation has an effective Child Protection Policy and clear procedures in place, and that these are known to all members of staff (including supply staff) and volunteers.
 - 5.3.5 That the Governors receive regular reports on changes to the Child Protection Policy or procedures; the training undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, other staff, volunteers and Governors; the number of child protection incidents/cases (without detail or name); and how safeguarding issues are addressed through the curriculum.
 - 5.3.6 That they review and up–date (as appropriate) the organisations Child Protection Policy on an annual basis.
- Completes and records the outcomes of a Section 128 check for all Governors in non-regulated activity.

6. Procedures for Referral/ Principles for Interventions to Protect Children

6.1. Every complaint or suspicion of abuse will be taken seriously and action taken in line with this policy and the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges September 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - A Guide to Inter-Agency working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children July 18.
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance – March 2015.

6.2. 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. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the Staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration.

6.3.2 Normal referral processes must be used when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

6.4. Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead

6.4.1 On being notified of a complaint or suspicion of abuse, the action to be taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take into account:

- (a) The local inter-agency procedures of the Hackney or Haringey Safeguarding Children Board.
- (b) Where relevant, local information sharing protocols relating to Channel referrals.
- (c) The nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence, including the identification of someone who may already be engaged in illegal terrorist-related activity, will always be referred to children's social care and, if appropriate, the police.

(d) The child's wishes or feelings.

(e) Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.

6.4.2 If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult children's social care on a "no names" basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child might be at risk of significant harm, a referral to children's social care will be made without delay (and in any event within 24 hours).

6.4.3 If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will confirm the referral in writing to children's social care within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgement is received within three working days, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact children's social care again immediately.

6.4.4 All information and action taken, including reasons for any decision made, will be fully documented. All referrals to children's social care will be accompanied by a standard referral form.

6.6. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with other agencies and support services over child protection and other safeguarding issues.

6.7. Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual child/family shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee.

6.8. We understand that concerns about significant harm may arise about children who already have an allocated social worker and we will pass on such concerns without delay.

6.9. Every member of staff has an individual responsibility for child protection. Where there is concern about a child's welfare and the designated senior person is not available, or it is felt that he is not taking the concerns seriously, another person in the organisations management team should refer to the Children's Services Social Care local office.

6.10. Staff must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children's social care as appropriate."

6.11. "Where relevant, the organisation will co-operate with the Channel panel and the police in providing any relevant information so that each can effectively carry out its functions to determine whether an individual is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The organisation will respond to requests for information from the police promptly and in any event within five to ten working days. "

7. Dealing with Allegations against Governors, Staff and Volunteers

7.1. Local procedures plus the Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', and DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges September 2024, Part 4: Allegations of Abuse made against Teachers and Staff.

7.1.1 Refreshing Minds has procedures for dealing with allegations against Governors, Staff and Volunteers who work with children that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect Staff and Volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures are set out in Dealing with allegations against members of staff Policy including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Governors or Volunteers and follow Part 4 of Keeping children safe in education 2024.

7.1.2 The Local Authority has designated a particular officer to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children (designated officer). The designated officer will be informed immediately and in any event within one working day of all allegations against Governors, Staff and volunteers that come to the organisation's attention and appear to meet the criteria set out in the whistleblowing policy including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Staff, Governors or Volunteers.

7.2. All concerns/allegations about adults who work with refreshing minds will be taken seriously and will be dealt with by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. She will contact the Officer for Child Protection (who is the LA Designated Officer (LADO) for consultation.

The LADO will record the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken, which could include a referral to investigating agencies. (If the LADO is not available, there should be no delay in taking advice or referring to Children's Services Social Care.)

Due recognition will be paid to the stress caused by such an allegation and appropriate skills deployed to balance the needs of the child and support for the member of staff. However, the needs of the child must take precedence (Children Act 1989, Section 1 (1) (b)).

A decision will be taken as to whether the adult should be suspended without prejudice / removed to other duties / work under supervision during the course of the investigation.

7.3. Where the allegation is against any of the Designated Safeguarding Deputies, the Governor will take responsibility for dealing with the issue; where the allegation is against the DSL, the Chair of Governors will take responsibility for dealing with the issue in consultation with the Governors. Where concerns are about the Chair of Governors, these should be taken directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

7.4. In order to minimise the risk of harm to children and of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with children, the governors aim to ensure, that all staff and volunteers are aware of safe working practice and follow guidelines on the use of control and physical restraint.

7.5. Where a member of staff or a volunteer is either dismissed, resigns, or is found to be unsuitable, or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, the Department of Health administrators should be notified so that the name may be included on the List 99 for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

7.6. When an allegation of abuse on the premises is made, OFSTED will be informed as soon as practicable but certainly within 14 days of the allegation being made.

7.7. If the allegation is against a staff member who is on 'supply' from an agency, Refreshing Minds retains lead responsibility and must advise the agency about the process that they will progress an allegation or complaint against the agency's supply staff member.

7.8.1 Detailed guidance is given to Staff and Volunteers to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place children or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a child. This guidance is in the Code of Conduct – Staff Behaviour Policy, a hard copy of which is given to all Staff on joining the organisation. It includes details of additional safeguarding arrangements where Staff engage in one-to-one and meetings with children

7.8.2 Staff and Volunteers should also feel able to follow the organisations separate Whistleblowing Policy to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices, potential failures by the organisation or its Staff to safeguard properly the welfare of children or other wrongdoing in the workplace that does not involve the safeguarding and welfare of children.

8. Allegations against children- Peer on Peer abuse sexting

8.1. Allegations against children should be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy. Refreshing Minds will continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to young people, with full consideration to the impact on the emotional, mental health and well-being of all young people involved. Ultimately the system and processes that the organisation operates are designed with the best interests of the Child at their heart.

8.2. Refreshing Minds will take advice from children's social care on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all children involved including the child accused of abuse.

8.3. If it is necessary for a child to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the organisation will ensure that, subject to the advice of children's social care, the child's parents are informed as soon as possible and that the child is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

8.4. Where an allegation is made against a child, both the victim and the alleged perpetrator will be treated as being at risk and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this Policy will be followed.

8.5. See Appendix 4 for full details of the Peer on Peer Abuse Policy and Procedures.

8.6 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including racial bullying and cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Serious violence;
- Personal violence;
- Upskirting;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced inappropriate imagery)

8.7 All staff should be clear that these are complex issues to manage and must be referred to the DSL who will draw in appropriate professional help to support victim and perpetrator and make the requisite statutory referrals.

8.8 A risk assessment will be considered at this time to protect all parties involved.

Consideration should be given to keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate class groups where possible. The plan should be monitored, and review dates set.

9. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

It is important to note that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report.

As per Part one of Keeping children safe in education, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they will act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the organisation should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.

As with all safeguarding concerns, it is important that in such instances staff take appropriate action in accordance with this policy. Staff do not assume that someone else is responding to any incident or concern. If in any doubt, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). In such cases, the basic safeguarding principles remain the same, but it is important to understand why the victim has chosen not to make a report themselves. This discussion should be handled sensitively and with the support of children's social care if required.

Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The risk and needs assessment should consider:

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

Risk assessments are recorded and will be kept under review. At all times, the organisation should be actively considering the risks posed to all their users and will put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

10. Supporting Children

11.1 We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame herself or find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

11.2 Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'faltering growth' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals. In extreme cases we will inform local social services or on-call duty social worker.

11.3 When a child may present with one of the protected characteristics staff are here to support them. This is referred to the DSL and dealt with according to the organisations referral procedures.

Actual support for the child can be internal or external, depending on the support needed.

Where a child with one of the protected characteristics is identified or comes forward, that child is not at risk and is properly looked after.

11.4 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

11.5 Refreshing Minds will support all children by:

- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment
- Liaising and working together with all other agencies
- Ensuring there is a named member of staff for 'Looked After' children
- Specialised support will be given for children who are struggling with any difficulties related to their sexual identity or orientation (or any other protected characteristic) or for those children who may have a parent or close family member with a protected characteristic (including transgender). The designated lead or a designated staff member will provide direct support and will draw in external support to support the child.
 - **Private Fostering**

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of volunteers or staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children. Staff must notify the DSL who in turn must inform the local authority (if arrangement is beyond 28 days) to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

Click for [link to DfE guidance on private fostering](#)

12. Record Keeping

12.1 We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.

12.2 We investigate claims or suspicions with sensitivity. Staff and volunteers take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.

12.3 Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- Offers reassurance to the child;
- Listens to the child; and
- Gives reassurance that she will take action.
- The member of staff does not question the child.

12.4 Any member of staff or volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible, noting what was seen or said (recording the child's own words as far as possible) putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. Information should be recorded in non-judgmental, non-emotive terms.

12.5 Staff makes a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- The names of any other person present at the time.
- All records must be dated and signed.

12.6 All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

12.6.1 Refreshing Minds will keep all child protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The organisation will co-operate with police and children's social care to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under **s.47 of the Children Act 1989** in accordance with the requirements of ***Working together to safeguard children (July 2018)***, the ***Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015)***, and ***Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2015)***.

12.6.2 Where allegations have been made against Staff, the organisation will consult with the designated officer and, where appropriate, the police and children's social care to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom.

12.7 All records relating to child protection concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential. They do not form part of the child's educational records and are not required to be disclosed to parents/carers. Any requests from parents'/carers' solicitors to have records disclosed to them should be passed to one of the county solicitors for advice.

12.8 Files relating to concerns about children will include a chronology of incidents and subsequent actions/outcomes.

12.9 Staff must ensure that they monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of children on the Child Protection Register and that they provide information as required by the social worker, the LA Officer for Child Protection and the Education Social Work and Attendance Service. There should be agreement via the protection plan about at what point the social worker or another member of his/her team will be informed if a child on the Child Protection Register is absent.

13. Children with Special Educational Needs

13.1 There are additional barriers that can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with disabilities. Refreshing Minds recognise that children with SEN and/ or disabilities.

- Are more prone to peer group isolation and other children
- Are being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing signs.
- Have communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
(KCSIE 2024)

13.2 Refreshing Minds will therefore:

- Provide extra pastoral support for children (by the SENCO)
- Have careful consideration for disciplinary measures such as restraints or isolation in response to incidents involving these children.
- Create individual plans for children with SEND who may present with challenging behaviours.

(See DfE use of reasonable force July 2013)

13.3 The organisation recognises that children with special educational needs may be especially vulnerable to abuse and expect staff to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect.

13.4 Staff responsible for any intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and ensure the child's dignity is preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There will be close partnership with parents/carers.

14. Parental Involvement

14.1 This organisation is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all children.

14.2 Parents/carers will be made aware of the organisations Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Copies will be made available to parents.

14.3 As previously stated, where possible, concerns about children will be discussed with parents/carers in the first instance and the designated senior person should advise of the need to make referrals to the LADO local office, unless to do so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.

14.4 The organisation has at least two emergency contacts for every child.

15. Training

15.1 Refreshing Minds recognises the importance of up to date child protection training for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and for all other staff and volunteers in the organisation.

15.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead attends training events organised by Hackney LA or the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Deputies will have inter-agency training and receive 'refresher' training every two years. The DSL also has training in Safer Recruitment.

15.3 Child protection is a vital part of induction training for all new staff and volunteers, including all those who join during the year. Staff who do not have lead responsibility for child protection will receive 'refresher' training every three years.

15.4 Prevent duty training will be consistent with Home Office WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training.

15.5 Induction

All Staff, including temporary Staff and Volunteers, will be provided with induction training that includes:

- This Policy
- The Code of Conduct – Staff Behaviour Policy, including the Whistleblowing Procedure.
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and her identity and contact details, together with that of her Deputies.
- Child Protection training in accordance with the Hackney and Haringey Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board procedures.
- A copy of the **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**.
- The online general awareness training module on Channel.

15.6 Child Protection Training

- (a) All Staff and volunteers will receive a copy of this Policy and Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024*, and will be required to confirm that they have read and have understood how in practice, to discharge their role and responsibility as set out in this document.

Appendix A and this document must also be understood.

- (b) The Staff members and volunteers will undertake appropriate child protection training which will be updated every two years and following consultation with the Hackney and Haringey Safeguarding Children Board.
- (c) Staff development training will also include training on online safety and the online general awareness training module on Channel.

All training will be carried out in accordance with the Hackney & Haringey Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

17. Role of the Governing Body

17.1 Governors will ensure that the organisation has a Designated Safeguarding Lead in place and will nominate a governor with responsibility for safeguarding.

The nominated governor for safeguarding, in liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, will ensure that the organisation has an effective Safeguarding Policy and clear procedures in place, and that these are known to all members of staff and volunteers.

17.2 Newly appointed staff are required to read copies of the policy and procedures as part of their induction training, and to verify that they understand the contents by signing a specific form.

The governors will receive a written annual report on changes to the child protection policy or procedures; and more regularly of any interim changes at termly governors' meetings. They will also receive an annual audit report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead indicating the training she has undertaken, the training undertaken by other staff, volunteers and governors and the number of child protection incidents/cases (without detail or name).

17.2 The governors will review the updated Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis.

17.3 As previously stated, the Chair of Governors will take action, according to agreed procedures, where there are allegations against the DSL.

18. Whistle Blowing

19.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

19.2 All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the actions of colleagues. Any such concerns should be raised with the Whistle Blowing Officer- Mrs Halberstam.

19.3 Ofsted must be informed of allegations as soon as is reasonably practical but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation being made.

19.4 Staff should be aware that a whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a legal obligation has been breached
- there has been a miscarriage of justice

- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed

20 . Online Safety and Acceptable use of Technology

Online Safety

- The DSL and leadership team have read annex C regarding Online Safety within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024.
- Our organisation recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile phones and cameras and in accordance with KCSIE 2024and EYFS **has appropriate policies in place that are shared and understood by all members of the refreshing minds community.** Further information about specific approaches relating to this can be found in the **E-Safety Policy**, which can be found *in the main office*.

Phones and Images and computer usage

- 1.1. Mobile phones should not be used by staff at any time whilst caring for the children, except for emergencies only.

Additionally, images, or audio recordings can only be made within the guidelines of the organisations' multimedia/photography policy.

Please refer to our E- Policy; GDPR Policy; Photography and Multimedia Policy, which aim to safeguard children from inappropriate images or contacts.

21. Security

22.1 Refreshing Minds abides by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person has access to the children.

22.2 Refreshing Minds will take all practicable steps to ensure that premises are as secure as circumstances permit.

22.3 We take security steps to ensure that we have control that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. **The organisation keeps a Visitors book at Reception. All visitors must sign in on arrival and sign out on departure. They are escorted whilst on premises by a member of Staff or appropriately vetted Volunteer. All visitors will be given a name badge with the title “Visitor”, which must be clearly displayed and worn at all times whilst on site.**

22.4 Refreshing Minds policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras is as follows:

22.4.1 Staff and Volunteers should use mobile phones and cameras in accordance with the guidance set out in the Code of Conduct – Staff Behaviour Policy. They may not use mobile phones to photograph or record events taking place or of the children.

22.4.2 Parents may bring mobile phones on to the premises, but may only take photographs during events such as plays, concerts or sporting events for personal use. Parents should be reminded that the publication of such images (including on personal social networking sites even where access to the image may be limited) may be unlawful.

22.4.3 Other specific Safeguarding Issues

Some specific safeguarding issues are detailed or expanded on in Appendix

Including: Serious violence, upskirting, honour based violence, contextual safeguarding, county lines, fabricated or induced illness.

(Further information can be found on them by following the links in Part One of KCSIE Sept 2024)

23. Monitoring and Review

- 23.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the procedures set out in this Policy and the implementation of these procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, working with the Governors as necessary. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will update the Senior Leadership Team regularly on the operation of the organisations safeguarding arrangements.
- 23.2 Any child protection incidents will be followed by a review of these procedures by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and a report made to the Governing Body. Where an incident involves a member of Staff, the designated officer will assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the organisation's procedures. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements at any time will be remedied without delay.
- 23.3 **The full Governing Body will undertake an annual review of this Policy and the organisation's safeguarding procedures**, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation, and the effectiveness of inter-agency working. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with the Nominated Governor for Child Protection, preparing a written report commissioned by the full Governing Body. The written report should address how the organisation ensures that this Policy is kept up to date; Staff training on safeguarding; referral information; issues and themes which may have emerged and how these have been handled; and the contribution the organisation is making to multi-agency working in individual cases or local discussions on safeguarding matters.
- 23.4 The full Governing Body should also consider independent corroboration, such as inspection of records or feedback from external agencies including the local authority designated officer. The full Governing Body will review the report, this Policy and the implementation of its procedures, and consider the proposed amendments to the Policy before giving the revised Policy its final approval.
- 23.5 **Detailed minutes recording the review(s) by the Governing Body will be made.**

24. Named Key Contacts (with their contact email addresses and telephone numbers)

- **Children's Social Care Services**
First Response (Weeks Daytime) – 020 8356 5500
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team – 020 8820 2346
- **Safeguarding Managers & Local Authority Designated Officers** (covering the local catchment area)

Jeffrey Baker: 0208 356 4569

- **Children’s Social Care
Customer Contact Centre 0208 809 2777**

- **Local Police 101**
(Ask for the Protecting Vulnerable Persons Unit in your area)

The telephone numbers of the relevant Prevent partners are as follows:

- **Channel Police Practitioner 020 8356 8104**

- **Non-emergency DfE advice 020 7340 7264**

Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

25. Key Contacts for Children

- **Childline 0800 1111**
- **NSPCC 0808 800 5000**
- **Children’s Commissioner 0800 528 0731**
<http://childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/>
- **Counsellors**
Mrs P Labin 07515 436 673
Mrs R Gabarchik 0208 800 5419

Authorised by

The Governor with Responsibility for Safeguarding, pending resolution of the Board of Governors at their next meeting

J. Wider

Signed

.....

Mr J Wider

Chairman of Governors

Date

1 September 2024

Effective date of the policy

1 September 2024

Appendix 1: The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Post title:	Designated Senior Lead (DSL)
Reporting to:	Governors
Responsible for:	Safeguarding children in education
Liaising with:	SENCO, Children’s Social Care, Parents/Carers

1. MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB

In accordance with **Annex B of *Keeping children safe in Education 2024***, the main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are:

1.1 To identify signs of abuse.

1.2 Managing Referrals

1.2.1 To take lead responsibility for referring all cases of suspected abuse of any student to children’s social care and:

- (a) the designated officer for all child protection concerns which involve a member of Staff or Volunteer.
- (b) the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where a member of Staff is dismissed or has left due to risk / harm to a child; and / or
- (c) the police where a crime may have been committed.

1.2.2 Liaising with other leaders to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under **section 47 of the Children Act 1989** and police investigations.

1.2.3. To act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant Agencies

- 1.3 Maintain detailed and accurate written records of child protection concerns and ensure they are kept securely.

2. Raising Awareness

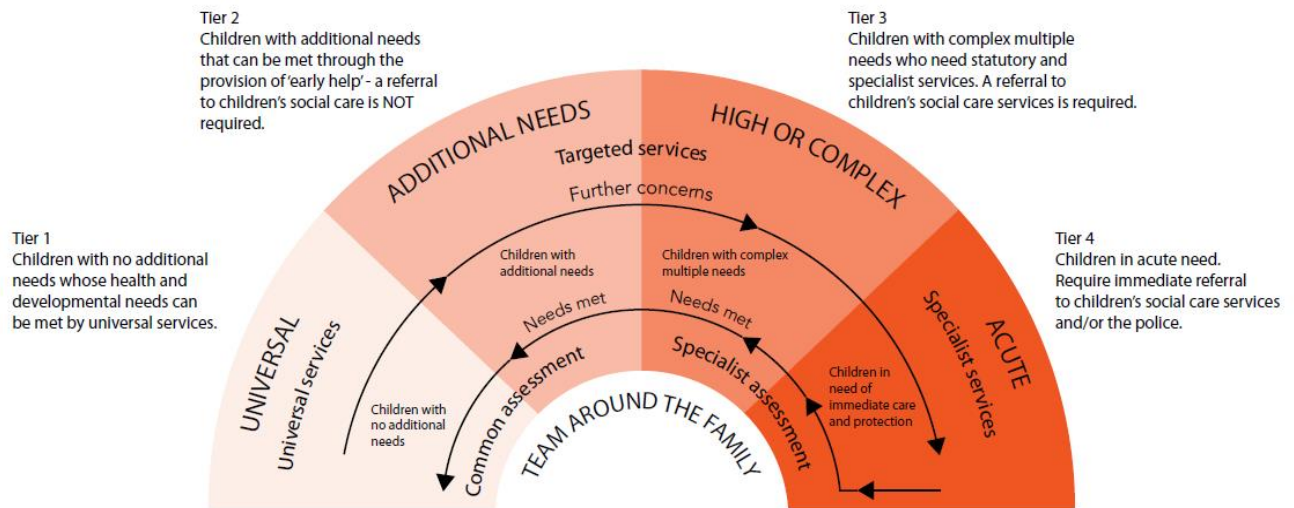


Figure 1: The Continuum of Need model

- 2.1 Ensure that all staff have a copy of, and understand, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- 2.2 Ensure that Child Protection training is part of the induction for all new staff and that they are linked into any relevant training.
- 2.3
- 2.4 Ensure that a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures is available publicly and for any parent who requests to see it.
- 2.5 Ensure that parents are made aware that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made to children's social care and the organisation's role in this.
- 2.6 Maintain links with Hackney's Safeguarding Children Board to ensure staff are aware of training opportunities and the local policies on safeguarding.
- 2.7 In accordance with the ***Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales*** and ***Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn***

into terrorism (2015), the Designated Safeguarding Lead has, in addition, the following responsibilities:

- (a) Liaising with local Prevent co-ordinators, the police and Local Authorities, and through existing multi-agency forums, including referrals to the Channel Police Practitioner where indicated;
- (b) Undergoing WRAP or other appropriate training;
- (c) Monitoring the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to the Prevent duty.

3. MAIN DUTIES

- 3.1** Provide support, advice and guidance to colleagues.
- 3.2** Recognise signs/indicators of abuse and decide when referrals to Children's Social Care/other relevant agencies are appropriate.
- 3.3** Refer all cases of allegations against adults (or suspected cases) to the Designated Officer or team of officers in the local Authority.
- 3.4** Liaise with relevant agencies (where appropriate) to inform the decision on whether to make a referral to Children's Social Care.
- 3.5** Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and concerns. Ensure these records are stored in a locked filing cabinet and are not accessible by staff or children.
- 3.6** Ensure the organisation's child protection and safeguarding related policies are up to date and reviewed annually. Work with the Governing body / named Governor regarding this.
- 3.7** Ensure every member of staff has access to and understands the organisation's child protection and safeguarding related policies (including whistle blowing etc.).
- 3.8** Ensure that parents have access to and have seen the Child Protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role the establishment has in this to avoid possible future conflict.

- 3.9** Ensure all staff have induction training which covers child protection / safeguarding and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately when they arise.
- 3.10** Ensure that all staff have refresher training at least once every two years and that all new staff receive this training during their induction to the organisation. Keep accurate records of staff participation in this.
- 3.11** The Designated Safeguarding Lead, has undertaken child protection training and training in inter-agency working, and will attend recorded refresher training at **two-yearly intervals** in order to:
- 3.11.1** understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
 - 3.11.2** have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
 - 3.11.3** Ensure each member of staff has a copy of, and understands, the organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
 - 3.11.4** be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
 - 3.11.5** be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
 - 3.11.6** obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
 - 3.11.7** Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, may put in place to protect them and to meet the requirements and procedures of the Local Authority's Safeguarding Children Board.

4. SKILLS

- 4.1 Excellent relationships with children, parents and Staff (including being open and approachable).
- 4.2 Excellent communication skills.
- 4.3 High level of sensitivity.
- 4.4 Maintain confidentiality as appropriate and required.
- 4.5 Maintain accurate and detailed records.
- 4.6 Analyse information and determine the appropriate course of action.
- 4.7 Able to deal with emotionally stressful matters.
- 4.8 Able to contribute effectively to planning / review / strategy meetings.

APPENDIX 2 Types of abuse and neglect

1. **Abuse is** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
2. **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.

3.1 POSSIBLE SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries or improbable explanations
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help

- Aggression/bullying
- Over compliant behaviour or 'watchful attitude'
- Running away
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation

3. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children, including through '**county lines**' and as part of '**honour-based violence**'. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional Abuse can occur when Domestic Abuse happens in the presence of children. Hearing or seeing domestic abuse can have a traumatic effect on children.

4.1 POSSIBLE SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging
- Drug/solvent abuse
- 'Neurotic' behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking, and so on
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends

5. **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.

5.1 POSSIBLE SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown for example in drawings, vocabulary, games, and so on
- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends
- Pregnancy (in older young people)

6.. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance 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.

6.1 POSSIBLE SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF NEGLECT

- Hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Tiredness

7. Female Genital Mutilation

7.1 FGM is a deeply rooted tradition, widely practised mainly among specific ethnic populations in Africa and parts of the Middle East and Asia, which serves as a complex form of social control of women's sexual and reproductive rights. It is illegal to practice FGM. Refreshing Minds follows the guidelines set out in Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation.

7.2 If you are worried about a child under 18 who is at risk of FGM or has had FGM, **you have a legal obligation to share this information with social care or the police.** It is then their responsibility to investigate, safeguard and protect any girls involved. Other professionals should not attempt to investigate cases themselves.

7.3 Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl or woman being at risk of FGM, or already having undergone 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 – see Section 2.5 for the nationalities that traditionally practise FGM. Provided that the mutilation takes place in the UK, the nationality or residence status of the victim is irrelevant. Professionals should also note that the girls and women 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

7.4 DUTY TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN. Safeguarding girls at risk of harm of FGM poses specific challenges because the families involved may give no other cause for concern, for example with regard to their parenting responsibilities or relationships with their children. However, there still remains a duty for all professionals to act to safeguard girls at risk – with four key issues to consider:

1. An illegal act being performed on a female, regardless of age.
2. The need to safeguard girls and young women at risk of FGM.
3. The risk to girls and young women where a relative has undergone FGM.
4. Situations where a girl may be removed from the country to undergo FGM.

7.5 SITUATIONS WHERE A GIRL MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE COUNTRY TO UNDERGO FGM . As described in Sections 2.3 and 2.4, it is unlawful to perform FGM, or to assist a girl or woman to perform FGM on herself, in England and Wales. It is an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to perform FGM, or to assist a girl to perform FGM on herself, abroad. It is also an offence for a UK national or permanent resident to assist a non-UK person to perform a relevant act of FGM (as defined in section 3(2) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003) abroad – this would cover taking a girl abroad to be subjected to FGM. However, there may be instances where the exact risk of this occurring is not known, but one parent – or a professional – may be concerned enough to alert professionals. In certain circumstances a Prohibitive Steps Order or Wardship Order can be used to prevent a girl being removed from the country – Chapter 5 describes legal interventions in more detail.

8. Child Sexual Exploitation

8.1 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.

8.2 Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess. The indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for ‘normal adolescent behaviours’. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity and an assessment which analyses the risk factors and personal circumstances of individual children to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given. 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.

8.3 Any practitioner working with a child who they think may be at risk of child sexual exploitation will follow the guidance set out in Working Together and share this information with local authority children’s social care. You should refer any concerns about a child’s welfare to local authority children’s social care. If you believe a child is in immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police.

8.4 Staff must be responsive and pro-active: everyone should be alert to the potential signs and indicators of child sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of abuse, and exercise professional curiosity in their day to day work. It is better to help children and young people as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging;

9. Child criminal exploitation: county lines

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

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young

people or adults; and

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

10. Upskirting

‘Upskirting’ typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

11. Serious violence

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

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence> and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Further information around safeguarding issues can be found in KCSIE 2024 ANNEX A.

13 What is meant by ‘harm’?

13.1 S31(9) Children Act 1989, as amended by Adoption & Children Act 2002

- **‘Harm’** means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- **‘Development’** means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development
- **‘Health’** means physical or mental health
- **‘Ill-treatment’** includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical

13.2 The courts are bound by the following principles in decision-making:

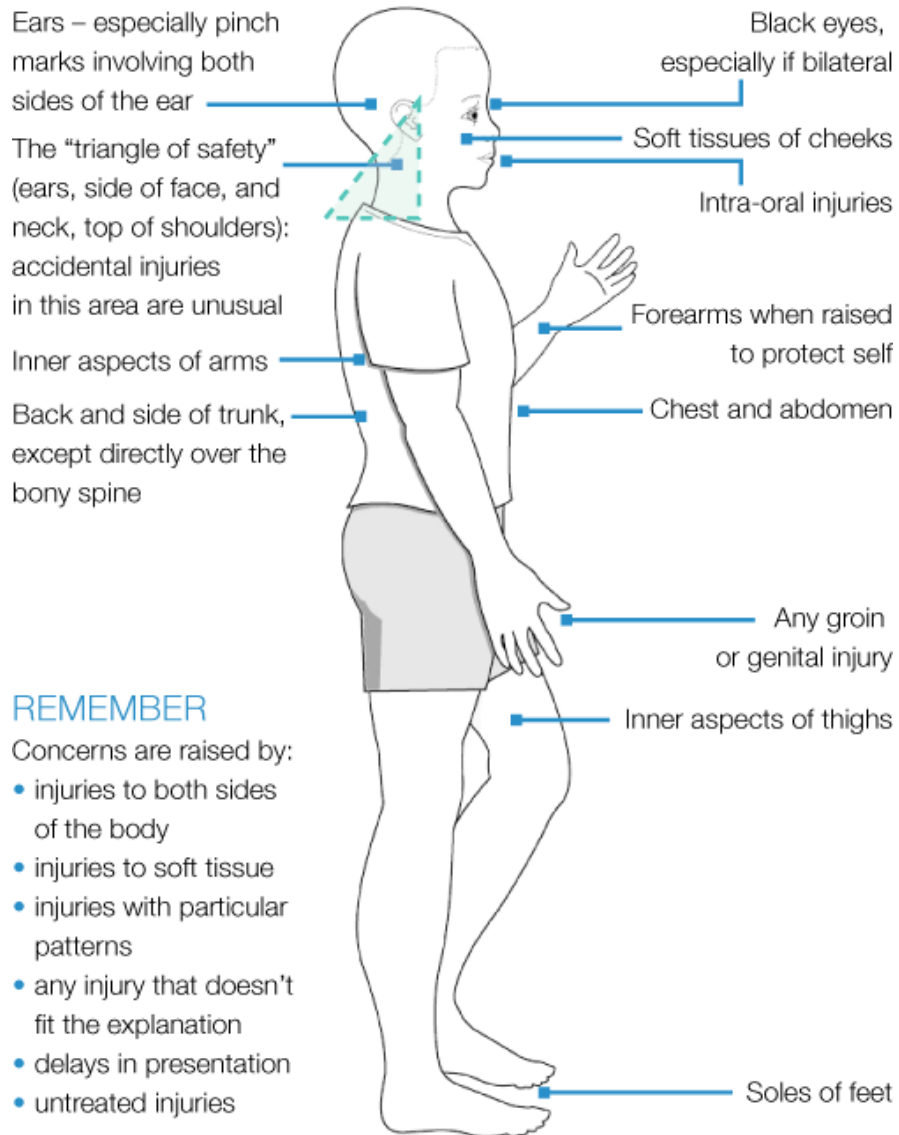
- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Children should usually be brought up in their own families
- Courts shall have regard to the principle that delaying procedures is detrimental to the child’s welfare

- Delays in hearing a case works against the child's welfare
- Courts should not make an order if not making an order is better for the child
- Courts should pay attention to a range of specific issues including:
 - The child's wishes and feelings
 - Ability of parents/carers to meet the needs of the child
 - Likely effects of changing the child's circumstances

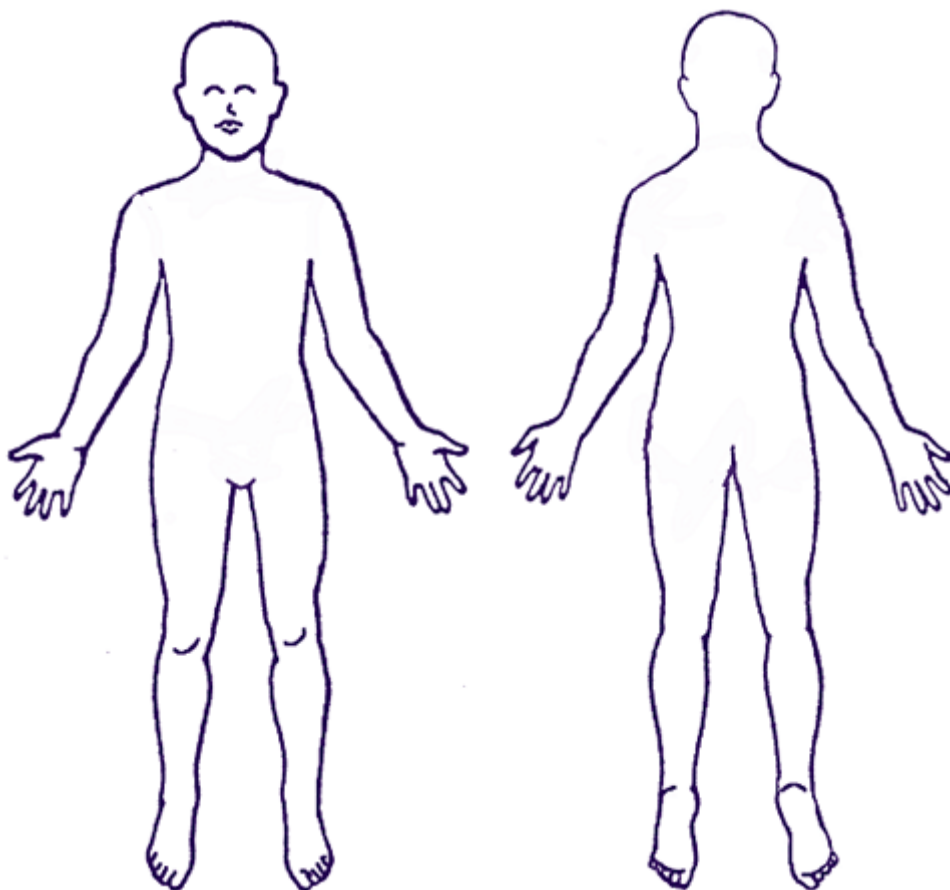
13.3 Recording

- Record the evidence:
 - What you have seen
 - What the child said, using the child's words, not your interpretation
 - What you said
 - Note the context, time and date on your record and sign it
 - Then say how you interpret all the above and what your concerns are about this information – it is OK to make hypotheses as long as you are clear that you are doing so
- Use plain language and type up your recording
- Do not confuse judgements with the facts
- Remember that service users can access their records at any time
- Give evidence for opinions
- Be precise
- Seek advice as to what to do next from your Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser

Signs of Abuse



Recording injuries



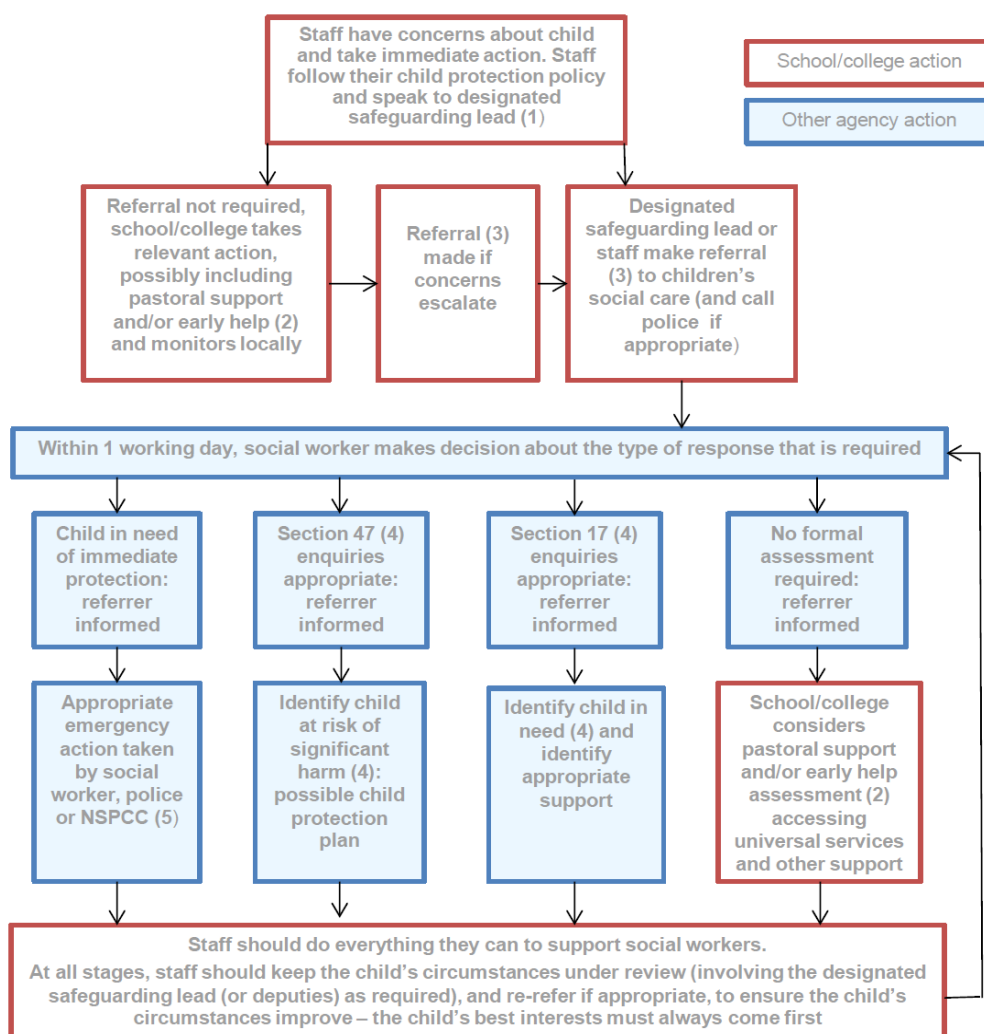
Appendix 3: Guidance for Staff and Volunteers on suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse, and action to be taken

1. Disclosures or information may be received from children, parents or other members of the public. Refreshing Minds recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly all Staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity and follow the guidance in this Policy.
2. Staff should be aware of the distinction between children in need and children at risk of harm, and respond appropriately.
3. **Action Staff must take**
 - 3.1 A member of Staff or Volunteer suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:
 - 3.1.1 must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. The member of Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place;
 - 3.1.2 must not ask leading questions, i.e. a question that suggests its own answer;
 - 3.1.3 must reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of Staff should explain that they need to pass on the information in accordance with this Policy so that the correct action can be taken; and
 - 3.1.4 must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation made as soon as possible after the end of the discussion with the child. The record should include:
 - (a) the date and time;
 - (b) the place of the conversation; and
 - (c) the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence;and must be signed by the person making it, using names and not initials.
 - 3.2 The written record and all evidence, for example scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers, must be kept securely and passed on when reporting the matter in accordance with paragraph 3.3 below.
 - 3.3 All suspicions or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, unless it is an allegation against a member of

Staff in which case the procedures set out in Dealing with allegations against members of Staff Policy including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Governors or Volunteers should be followed.

- 3.4 **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. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the Staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration.**

Actions where there are concerns about a child



4.

4.1 In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a Staff member, see also the separate policy on *Allegations against, Governor or volunteers or Staff*.

4.2 Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

4.3 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.

4.4 This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

1. Introduction

1.1 **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024** makes it the responsibility of *governing bodies and proprietors* to ensure that their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, any system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

1.2 At Refreshing Minds we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

2. Purpose and Aim

2.1 Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. The purpose of this Appendix is to explore the many forms of peer on peer abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.

3. Framework and Legislation

The relevant legislation on which this Policy Appendix is based is as follows:

3.1 **Children's Act 1989** which states that the child's welfare is paramount.

3.2 **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018** which states that every assessment of a child, '*must be informed by the views of the child*' and '*It is important to understand the resilience of the individual child when planning appropriate services.*'

3.3 **Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024.**

4. Introduction to abuse and harmful behaviour

Abusive behaviour can happen and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

5. Types of Peer on Peer abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described below and followed by advice and support on actions to be taken:

5.1 Physical abuse, e.g. biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc

Physical abuse may include hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering the action or punishment to be taken.

5.2 Sexually harmful behaviour / sexual abuse e.g. inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or 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 and inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse.

5.3 Bullying e.g. physical, name calling, homophobic etc

5.3.1 Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

5.3.2 In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An imbalance of power: young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

5.3.3 Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, as well as excluding someone from a group on purpose.

5.4 Cyber bullying

5.4.1 Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

5.4.2 We are aware that there will be some children who do manage to access unfiltered internet and therefore may have access to cyber bullying or sexting. Our antennae are very carefully attuned to the children who will be accessing such material and this is being dealt with as detailed in this policy below.

5.5 Prejudiced Behaviour

5.5.1 The term **prejudice-related bullying** refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

6. Action expected to be taken by all Staff

- 6.1 Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm:
- 6.1.1 It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively.
 - 6.1.2 It is necessary to gather the information and to get the true facts about what has occurred as soon after the event as possible as the child(ren) may have forgotten.
 - 6.1.3 It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.
 - 6,1,4 In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all Staff dealing with such incidents, talking to young people, and taking immediate action, do provide support in a calm and consistent manner.
 - 6.1.5 Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.
 - 6.1.6 Staff should involve the DSL at all stages and for all allegations even for seemingly minor incidences.

6.2 Gather the Facts:

- 6.2.1 this can be done by Staff member, form teacher, anti-bullying officer, DSL.
- 6.2.2 Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person in order to gain clarity with open questions, where; when; why; who; what happened; who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene? Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess): has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

- 6.2.3 Pass all information on to the DSL and together discuss next steps and to decide on a course of action.

6.3 Points to consider

- What are the ages of the children involved?
- How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved?
- In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills, may show a particular interest in exploration around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following).
- Where did the incident or incidents take place?
- Was the incident in an open, visible place to others?
- If so was it observed?
- If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?
- What was the explanation by all children involved of what had occurred?
- Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved?
- Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case is it regular and repetitive?
- Is the version of one young person different from another and why?
- What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?
- Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? For example, do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch?
- Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour?
- Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived?
- Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?
- In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care or the DSL.
- Repetition - Has the behaviour been repeated with an individual on more than one occasion?
- In the same way it must be considered, has the behaviour persisted with an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.
- 7.2 If, from the information that you gather, you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also).

8. Informing parents

- 8.1 Informing parents must take place face to face.
- 8.2 Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm / abuse a young person may be suffering, can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

9. For the young person who has been harmed

- 9.1 What support they require will depend on the individual young person.
- 9.2 It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor.
- 9.3 It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future.
- 9.4 If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups relationships with other young people, or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required. An **action plan** must therefore be drawn up, detailing the support that will be given and how monitoring will be established.
- 9.5 Other action plan interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group, for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.
- 9.6 If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them, so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues, and identified services to offer additional support.

10. For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

- 10.1 It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way.
- 10.2 It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through a CAF / strengthening families / early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members, thus an **action plan** must be drawn up, detailing the consequences and support that will be given and how monitoring will be established.
- 10.3 Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has been concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.
- 10.4 Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multiagency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour. The action plan may also include a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion / inclusion / seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.
- 10.5 It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

Appendix 5 Dealing with Allegations against Members of Staff including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Governors or Volunteers

1. Reporting an allegation against a member of Staff including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a Governor or volunteer

- 1.1 Where an allegation or complaint is made against any member of Staff including the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a volunteer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Nominated Governor for Child Protection. The allegation will be discussed immediately with the designated officer before further action is taken.
- 1.2 Where an allegation is made against any Governor, the matter should be reported immediately to the Chairman of Governors or the Nominated Governor for Child Protection. If either the Chairman or the Nominated Governor are the subject of an allegation, the matter should be reported to the other. The allegation will be discussed immediately with the designated officer before further action is taken. Where appropriate, the Chairman of Governors will consult the Nominated Governor for Child Protection, and vice versa.
- 1.3 The person taking action in accordance with the procedures in this Appendix is known as the "case manager".

2. Disclosure of information

- 2.1 The case manager will inform the accused person of the allegation as soon as possible after the designated officer has been consulted.
- 2.2 The parents of the child[ren] involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. They will also be kept informed of the progress of the case, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The timing and extent of disclosures, and the terms on which they are made, will be dependent upon and subject to the laws on confidentiality and data protection, and the advice of external agencies.
- 2.3 Where the designated officer advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or the police or children's social care need to be involved, the case manager will not inform the accused or the parents / carers until these agencies have been consulted and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed.

Mental health

The current circumstances can affect the mental health of children and their parents in a way that affects behavior.

Some children may come to sessions having been exposed to a range of adversity including bereavement and long term anxiety. This may lead to an increase in social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) concerns.

The DfE guidance on mental health and behaviour helps to identify children who might need additional support, and to put this support in place. The guidance sets out how mental health issues can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include for example being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or excessive clinginess.

Appendix 7: Procedures for Working with Children with Mental Health needs

Legal Framework:

- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings May 2019 ‘the setting identifies children or learners who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, or who may need support with their mental health needs.’
- As set out in Chapter 6 of the statutory SEND 0-25 years Code of Practice 2015, schools need to be alert to how mental health problems can underpin behaviour issues in order to support children effectively, working with external support where needed. They also need to be aware of their duties under the Equality Act 2010, recognising that some mental health issues will meet the definition of disability.
- Note: Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Non-professional diagnoses, however well meant, can exacerbate or promote mental health problems.
- schools and organisations, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. This may include withdrawn children whose needs may otherwise go unrecognised. Children may be at more risk of Mental Health due to certain events such as a Loss (including loss of friendships) or life changes such as a new sibling.

- It is important that organisations provide support to children at such times, including those who are not presenting any obvious issues.
- The above tools are very helpful in validating concerns and providing a checklist for contributing factors that may also need checking (such as hearing, eyesight, bereavement, family issues). Both tools come with some intervention suggestions too. These tools also serve as important evidence in case the child needs to be referred onwards to specialist support.
- Not all children with mental health difficulties will have SEN. But persistent or serious mental health difficulties will often meet the definition of SEN, in that they lead to children having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

The SENCO should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for early intervention and identification, referral to experienced skilled professionals, and clear accountability systems.

- Where a child has a mental health condition that amounts to a disability.
- Changes in children's patterns of attainment, attendance or behaviour that are noticed along with an effective pastoral system so that at least one member of staff (e.g. a class teacher) knows every child well and has received training to spot where bad or unusual behaviour may have a root cause that needs addressing

When staff suspect a child has a mental health problem, SENCO should use the graduated response process (assess – plan – do – review) to put support in place.

Assess for a mental health Condition:

There are a number of identification and measurement tools, such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Boxall Profile, which can support this process and are recommended.

PLAN- DO- REVIEW

The following should be included in a child record of assessment, monitoring and action:

- an assessment to establish a clear analysis of the child's needs
- a plan to set out how the child will be supported
- action to provide that support; and
- regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision and lead to changes where necessary.

Useful contacts

Hackney Local Authority

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):– 020 8356 6842

Safeguarding in Education Team – 020 8820 7551 / 7276

Ofsted

email – enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

0300 123 4234 – about education or adult skills

0300 123 4666 – if you want to make a complaint or have a concern about any service Ofsted inspects or regulates (8.00am to 6.00pm)

0300 123 1231 – about children's services or any other aspect of our work

0300 123 3155 – whistleblowers hotline currently being piloted.

However before you call, please read the whistleblowers page on

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/About-us/Contact-us/Safeguarding-children-Ofsted-s-whistleblower-hotline>

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

Scheme.info@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

<http://www.isa-gov.org.uk>

Hackney & City Local Safeguarding Children Board

185 Morning Lane, Hackney, E9 6JX

020 8356 6082 / 4865

