



# The Sutton Academy

## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Status	<b>Statutory</b>
Responsible Trustees' Committee	<b>Trust Board</b>
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Responsible Person	<b>Ms G Medare</b>
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<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Policy statement and principles	4
The Children's Acts	4
Child protection statement	5
Key terminology	6
Safeguarding legislation	7
Roles and responsibilities	8
Good practice guidelines	10
Abuse of trust	10
Children who may be particularly vulnerable	10
Prevent	11
Sexting	12
Trafficking	12
Up skirting	13
Forced marriages	13
CSE and CCE	14
Peer on peer abuse	15
FGM	15
Contextual Safeguarding	16
Domestic Abuse	17
Missing Children	18
Support for those involved in a child protection issue	20
Complaints procedure	20
If you have concerns about a colleague	20/21
Allegations against staff	20/21
Staff training	21
Safer recruitment	22
Extended school and off-site arrangements	22
Photography and images	23
Online Safety	23
Operation encompass	24
When to call the police	24
Referring to the LA	24

Covid	25
School holidays	25
SEN	25
<b>Child protection procedures:</b>	26
- Recognising abuse and various abuse factors	27
-Mental Health	27
- Fabricated or Induced Illness	28
- Bullying including cyber bullying	30
- CSE and CCE	31
- Gangs and youth violence	32
- Private fostering	34
- Indicators of abuse	35
- Impact of abuse	36
- Taking action	36
- If you suspect a student is at risk	34
- Early Help	37
- If a student discloses abuse	37
- Notifying parents	38
- Referral to Children’s Social Care	38
- Children with sexually harmful behaviour	38
- Confidentiality and information-sharing	39
- Reporting directly to child protection agencies	40
<b>Appendices</b>	
1 Visiting staff child protection information leaflet	41/42
2 Confirmation of receipt form	43
3 Images consent form	44
4 Flow chart of actions	45
5 Essential contacts	46

## Key Personnel

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### 1. Policy Statement and Principles

The core Child Protection & safeguarding principles at The Sutton Academy are:

- The academy's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- Safer children make more successful learners
- Representatives of the whole-school community of students, parents, staff and trustees will be involved in policy development and review
- Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.
- The policy is derived from the Children Act 1989 and amendment 2004, which is the legal framework underpinning all of safeguarding.
- [Children's Act 1989](#)
- [Children's Act 2004](#)

## **Child protection statement**

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

The Sutton Academy also recognises its duty to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism. Staff are trained to identify children who are at risk of radicalisation and what to do if children are identified.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and trustees and are consistent with those of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

## **Policy aims**

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

## **Policy principles**

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- Mobile phones are banned at The Sutton Academy. Any student found to be using their mobile phone will have it confiscated and a sanction will be put into place.

## **Terminology**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

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

**PREVENT** is one strand of the government's counter terrorism strategy and its main aim is to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism,

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the Academy, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

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

**Operation Encompass** is a unique Police and Education early intervention safeguarding partnership which ensures that a child's school is informed, prior to the start of the next school day, that there has been an incident of Domestic Abuse to which the child or young person has been exposed.

## **2. Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance**

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

Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students at the school.

The Teacher Standards 2012 state that teachers, including head teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

- The statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for Safeguarding Partnerships to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.
- The statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2020) is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) (England)
- Regulations 2014 (as amended by SI 2012/2962) and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2015.

Schools and colleges must have an understanding of this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and pupil referral units.

Due to their day-to-day contact with students, academy staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that academy staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to co-ordinate child protection arrangements. The Local Authority maintains a list of all Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSLs) for child protection.

#### **Definition of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:**

“Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.”

#### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

- have strategic responsibility for the academy’s approach to Safeguarding
- act as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of Safeguarding Partnership procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely but kept separate from, the student’s general file
- Will listen to the voice of the child and ascertain their wishes and feelings where required in order to be able to offer a tailored approach which meets the needs of each individual student. This is often done in cooperation with partner agencies
- Quality assures safeguarding work within the Academy
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children’s social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children’s social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- Supports the exploration of 3 days of absence if no contact with parents/carers is made
- ensures that when a student with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the pupil’s social worker is informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences as appropriate
- monitor and support Child In Need and Child Protection Plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the Safeguarding policy
- liaises with the nominated trustee and Principal (where the role is not carried out by the Principal) as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training (Principal’s PA)
- makes the child protection policy available to parents
- informs the safeguarding team when not available on site.

- are appropriately trained including:
  - Recognising how to identify signs of abuse and know when it is appropriate to make a referral to children's social care
  - Have knowledge of SCB procedures, the LADO role
  - Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses every two years and update the policy where necessary.

#### **The Principal:-**

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL and DDSL to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures
- ensures that students' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

#### **The Trust Board** ensures that the academy has:

- A DSL for child protection who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- a child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with the Safeguarding partnership requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Principal
- safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks
- a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Principal, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSL should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- Quality assure the DSL and Deputy DSL procedures
- Support the strategic vision of the DSL

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

#### **4. Good Practice Guidelines**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students at The Sutton Academy, we will establish standards of good practice.

Good practice includes:

- treating all students with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving students in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among students
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in students' behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information-sharing
- asking the student's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse.

#### **5. Abuse of Trust**

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

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

#### **6. Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

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

communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all students at The Sutton Academy receive equal protection, special consideration will be given to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- Looked after children
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats.

## **7. Prevent Duty**

[Prevent](#) addresses all forms of terrorism and violent extremism, regardless of race, culture, religion or politics. The multi-agency support programme for *Prevent* is called CHANNEL

People who are drawn to political or religious beliefs that support the use of violence will usually show 'early warning signs' that they are on a path towards radicalisation.

These can often be demonstrated by the following indicators.

- Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork that depicts or promotes extremist messages / images
- Accessing online resources for violent extremists – Internet, Facebook, YouTube, Chat rooms
- Significant changes in behaviour and/or friendships
- Wearing clothing and/or logos that represent extremist groups
- Voicing opinions drawn from extremist narratives
- Using language or hate terms that excludes others or incites violence ( and intolerance)

Prevent is another form of safeguarding. It provides a mechanism for raising awareness of issues of extremism and, where vulnerabilities are identified; it can facilitate the [CHANNEL](#) process so that a multi-agency approach can be used to support that vulnerable person.

As an academy we aim to build students resilience against radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values and enabling to channel extremist views.

All concerns should be raised with the DSL. They may hold information which you are not aware of that adds to the bigger picture. They will make the decision of whether the matter requires CHANNEL intervention.

## **Sexting**

'Sexting' is the sending of sexually explicit messages via mobile phones or computers, typically involving self-generated images sent between peers. 'Sexting' is not a gender-neutral practice and is often coercive (with boys pressuring girls to send images of themselves) and is linked to sexual harassment, bullying and even violence. Creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child.

Self-generated images from 'sexting' can also be used later as a form of harassment and abuse known as 'revenge pornography' which involves the distribution (or threat of distribution) of images, without the consent of those depicted, in order to threaten, control, bully, harm or humiliate them.

A referral will be made if;

- there was/is adult involvement;
- there was any coercion or blackmail;
- the images were extreme or violent;
- the child involved had already been identified as vulnerable or was under 13;
- there is an immediate risk of harm.

How we will respond to incidents of sexting:

- inform parents or carers - if this is not a risk
- record incidents
- search devices, identify and delete images
- interview and talk to the young people involved
- discipline young people involved if necessary
- report online imagery and ask for it to be removed
- refer to the appropriate agencies which might include Social Services or/and the Police.

More information regarding Sexting can be found here: [Sexting Guidance](#)

## Trafficking

Child trafficking is child abuse. It is where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs, bag theft
- Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Official definition: The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered 'trafficking in human beings'.

## Upskirting

Upskirting is a new criminal offence. The offence came into force in April 2019. Upskirting involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

The Sutton Academy have a no mobile phone policy on site. Staff should remain vigilant towards any student using their mobile phone.

## Forced Marriages

The Government's guidelines define forced marriage in the following terms:

*'Forced marriage is a form of child/domestic abuse and violence against women'.*

*[Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling Cases of Forced Marriage (2009)]*

Forced marriage is very distinct from arranged marriage:

*'In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. In forced marriages, one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.'* *[The Right to Choose: Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage (2008)]*

Whilst each individual case of forced marriage and attempted forced marriage is often very particular, they are likely to share a number of common and important characteristics, including:

- an extended absence from school/college, including truancy;
- a drop in performance or sudden signs of low motivation;
- excessive parental restriction and control of movements;
- a history of siblings leaving education to marry early;
- evidence of self-harm, treatment for depression, attempted suicide, social isolation, eating disorders or substance abuse;
- evidence of family disputes/conflict, domestic violence/abuse or running away from home.
- evidence of honour-based violence.

On their own, these characteristics may not indicate forced marriage. However, it is important for the academy to be satisfied that where these behaviours occur, they are not linked to forced marriage.

If teachers have suspicions or are concerned that a student may be about to be forced into marriage or may be a victim of forced marriage, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible. Normal Child Protection procedures will be followed.

## **8. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, they may receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, attention, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual act or activities.

Child sexual exploitation grooming can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Criminal Exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm. It involves drug networks or gangs, grooming and exploiting children and young people to carry drugs, money and become involved in criminal activities. It is sometimes known as County Lines.

Like any other form of abuse and exploitation CCE:

- can affect any child of young person under the age of 18
- can still be exploitation if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or entitlement based methods of compliance, and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups (including young people)

- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation (such as age, gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, access to resources etc.)

If CCE/CE is suspected, a referral can be made to the Local Authority which may result in regular Child Exploitations meetings to ensure the welfare and safety of the child.

## **9. Peer on Peer abuse**

Is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control. Exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. Peer-on-peer abuse can take various form, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender based violence. If a child raises concerns surrounding the above this will never be passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up” and Year Teams will support the initial investigation before passing onto Safeguarding if needed.

If, as an academy we are concerned we will follow the procedures set out in this document.

Staff are on duty at all times during un-structured times. Any issues that may arise are dealt with in a swift manner. Mediation takes place between students and behaviour policy procedures are acted upon when required.

## **10. Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Female Genital Mutilation has been illegal in the UK since 1985, but legislation in 2003 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in 2005 in Scotland, also made it an offence to force a child to undergo Female Genital Mutilation abroad.

Suspensions may arise in a number of ways that a child is being prepared for Female Genital Mutilation to take place abroad.

Signs FGM might happen:

- A relative or someone is visiting from abroad (known as a cutter)
- A special occasion or ceremony take place where a girls becomes a woman
- A family arranges a long holiday over seas
- A girl has an unexpected long absence form school
- A girl struggles to keep up at school
- Known relative shave had FGM
- A girl runaways from home

Signs FGM have taken place:

- Struggling to walk, stand or sit
- Spending longer in the bathroom/toilet
- Appearing quiet or anxious
- Acting differently after a period of absence from school
- Asking for help without being explicit
- Avoidance of doctors for medical care

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse. Normal Child Protection procedures will be followed if school suspects a case of Female Genital Mutilation.

The FGM mandatory reporting duty is a legal duty provided for in the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015). The legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth (see section 2.1a for further information).

For the purposes of the duty, the relevant age is the girl's age at the time of the disclosure/identification of FGM (i.e. it does not apply where a woman aged 18 or over discloses she had FGM when she was under 18).

If you have any concerns that a young person is at risk please follow TSA safeguarding procedures.

## **11. Contextual Safeguarding**

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

Children's social care practitioners and school staff need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within familial context, and recognise the assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces as a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual safeguarding, therefore expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

If, as an academy, we are concerned a child is being exploited in an extra-familial context, we will follow the procedures set out in this document and consult/refer to social care.

## **12. Domestic Abuse**

Domestic Violence is the term applied to the varied forms of abuse experienced from a current or former intimate partner. It is a pattern of control, coercion and threats and can involve physical abuse (such as assault), emotional abuse (such as intimidation), sexual abuse (such as rape), psychological abuse (such as isolating them from friends and family), and financial abuse (such as using money to control them). Domestic violence can also be inflicted alongside wider family violence involving multiple perpetrators, including in gang-associated relationships and where family or community 'honour' is perceived to be at stake.

As well as being affected by domestic violence within parent/carer relationships at home, young people can also experience abuse within their peer relationships. Online Abuse Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including:

- social media
- text messages and messaging apps
- emails
- online chats
- online gaming
- live-streaming sites.

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online. As a lot of young people's social interaction now occurs through social media, they are exposed to online harassment and abuse from peers or adults. This facilitates and amplifies the violence and abuse they experience offline. Adults or peers can also manipulate online relationships to initiate non-contact sexual abuse (e.g. via webcam) or to exploit them into sexually abusive or exploitative relationships offline through making them send self-generated photographs (which can then be used to threaten, coerce and control them), or introducing them to sexualised or pornographic material.

Signs of online abuse

A child or young person experiencing abuse online might:

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet. Some of the signs of online abuse are similar to other abuse types:
  - cyberbullying
  - grooming
  - sexual abuse

- child sexual exploitation.

For more information go to [NSPCC Child Abuse](#)

### **13. Missing children**

The statutory guidance **Children Missing Education (September 2016)** sets out the key principles to enable local authorities in England to implement their legal duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to identify, as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education (CME). Local authorities should be able to demonstrate that they have considered this statutory guidance and, where it is not followed, the local authority should have reasonable grounds for not doing so.

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

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

When the whereabouts of a child is unclear or unknown, the school will initially complete and record one or more of the following actions before taking off roll in agreement with the Local Authority :

- make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- check local databases within the local authority
- check Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems
- follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children’s social care, and HMRC
- check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force
- check with agencies known to be involved with family
- check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known
- check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved
- check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is
- in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children’s Education Advisory Service (CEAS)
- home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives.

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive, and we treat each case on its individual merit and use our judgement, ensuring they have taken into account all of the facts of the case. Making these enquiries may not always lead to establishing the location of the child, but will provide a steer on what action the Academy will take next, for example, contact the police, children's social care and where there are concerns for the safety of a child who has travelled abroad, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

If a Child goes missing from school during the day as an Academy we will follow the below checklist:

- DSL informed immediately
- Check all registers
- ALT to watch CCTV to confirm
- Staff to use professional judgement to inform Police or relevant services
- Staff to try and locate child and complete risk assessment on child
- Parents are informed
- DSL to liaise with services to support finding child
- Once child is found all involved to be informed

#### **Children missing from home/care**

In the first instance the Police and or Social Care would be called. The Safeguarding team would speak to friends of the child. Often there is a press release. Parents are given a contact for out of hours.

#### **14. Helping children to keep themselves safe**

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons and through all aspects of school life. At The Sutton Academy our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with staff work out how those risks might be overcome. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety and tackling bullying procedures. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children, and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any worries they may have. Students have their own "student friendly" safeguarding policy so that they are clear on how safeguarding is managed at the academy.

## **15. Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. The Sutton Academy will support students and their families and staff by:

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

## **16. Complaints procedure**

The Sutton Academy's complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Principal and Trustees. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in the Safeguarding Information Booklet for Parents and the Safeguarding Information Booklet for Students.

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

## **17. If you have concerns or allegations about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The academy's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Principal. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

A copy of the academy whistleblowing policy can be found here: [The Sutton Academy Whistleblowing Policy](#)

NSPCC whistleblowing help line 0800 028 0285

### **18. Staff who are the subject of an allegation**

All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff this should be reported to the Principal. Allegations against the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#) (updated 2020). Further information is contained in the school's disciplinary procedures and the Child Protection 'Quick Guide' file for staff.

To make complaint/ referral or to discuss concerns the Academy will use the LADO

To make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the referrer is to complete the LADO referral form found on St. Helens website and email securely to [sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk) and then follow up with a telephone call to the Safeguarding Children Unit on **01744 671262 within 1 day of the allegation.**

### **19. Staff Training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and trustees will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the Principal (unless the Principal is the DP) and Trustees will receive training that is updated at every year and the DSL will receive full training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's Visiting Staff Leaflet (see: appendix 1). However, updates will be provided regularly and often.

In recruitment all Staff must read part 1 and annex A of the policy. All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering,

or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

## **20. Safer Recruitment**

The Sutton Academy endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe In Education (updated 2020)* together with the local authority and the school's individual procedures.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (from 2010 onwards)
- be interviewed by at least one colleague who have received safer recruitment training.

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

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy (see: appendix 2).

Where there is an allegation about a supply teacher the KCSIE guidance says, 'Whilst schools and colleges are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. 'In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome'

## **21. Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements**

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, the academy's child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our students attend off-site activities, The Sutton Academy will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place. Health, Safety, Welfare and Educational Welfare Visits

## **22. Photography and Images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so some safeguards must be in place. To protect students The Sutton academy will:

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

For an example image consent form, see: appendix 3.

## **23. Online Safety**

Most students will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, some men, women and young people may use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The academy's Esafety policy explains how we aim to keep students safe in school. Cyber-bullying by students, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour. Students' access to mobile phones when on site is limited and access to these types of sites is not allowed. Some pupils will undoubtedly be using these sites outside of school times and are regularly informed of the risks around this during PSHE. Online safety is also embedded throughout the curriculum. In addition parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using social media.

## **24. Operation Encompass**

Please be aware as an academy we are signed up to the police operation “Op Encompass”. Operation *Encompass* is supporting children through key adults. Operation *Encompass* is the reporting to schools before 9am on a school day when a child or young person has been involved or exposed to a domestic abuse incident the previous day/weekend. The information is given in strict confidence to a school’s Key Adult to enable support to be given dependent on the needs and wishes of the child. The Key Adult at The Sutton Academy is the Safeguarding Officer, Gemma Potter and in her absence the Assistant Principal, Gemma Medare.

## **25. When to call the police**

All of The Sutton Academy safeguarding team have been advised and shown the guidance on when to call the police using the NPCC guidance as recommended in the KCSIE 2020 documentation.

## **26. Refer to the LA**

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 19
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take
- to see the child as soon as possible if the decision is taken that the referral requires further assessment.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required). If, after a referral, the child’s situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child’s situation improves.

## **25. Covid**

For all other Covid Safeguarding concerns and amendments for 2020 please see Annex H of KCSIE (2020)

## **26. School holidays**

During term time, the designated safeguarding lead and/or a deputy should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. However, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities. The DSL will discuss this with the Principal before every holiday and plans will be put in place.

## **27. SEN**

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include

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

# **Child Protection Procedures**

## **Child Protection Procedures:**

### **Recognising abuse**

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

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler. Children may be abused in a family setting or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by others. Abuse can also take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **Mental Health**

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

The DfE advises that a school leadership team should ensure there are clear policies and processes in place to ensure that stigma is reduced and pupils feel comfortable talking about mental health concerns and that pupils should know where to go for further information or support should they want to talk about their own, their peers', or their families mental health or wellbeing.

As mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. It is essential that staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

When schools suspect that a pupil is having mental health difficulties, they should not delay putting support in place. The School leadership team will promote staff to be actively trained in mental health awareness.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (for example, rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse also includes grooming a child in preparation for abuse. It can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse can be committed by males, females and other children/young people.

### **Drug and alcohol misuse**

Drug and Alcohol misuse describes consumption that puts individuals at increased risk for adverse health and social consequences. The drugs used can be legal or illegal. Any misuse is treated as other safeguarding concerns. See throughout document relevant details for specific incidents. We will inform parents and police where necessary, offering support where possible.

### **Fabricated or induced illness**

Fabricated or induced illness by carers (FII) can cause significant harm to children. It involves a well child presented by a carer as ill or disabled, or presented with a more significant problem than he or she has in reality, and suffering harm as a consequence.

Fabricated or induced illness is often unreported, undetected, and is emotionally harmful. It is very complex issue. Usually involving the child's mother, most cases are children under five at the start.

Some of the indicators of fabricated or induced illness, include:

- the medical history doesn't make sense
- treatment is ineffective
- the symptoms disappear when the carer isn't around, and
- they can be seen repeatedly by different professionals looking for different things.

In the case of a school, it is likely that the possibility of FII may be picked up as a result of attendance issues.

Teachers and other school staff should be alert to:

- Frequent and unexplained absences from school, particularly from PE lessons.
- Regular absences to keep a doctor's or a hospital appointment.
- Repeated claims by a parent that a child is frequently unwell and that he/she required medical attention for symptoms which are vague in nature, difficult to diagnose and which teachers have not noticed themselves.

Where FII is suspected, the method of verifying the reasons for a child's absences should continue. It might be that the illnesses ascribed to the child include headaches, tummy aches, dizzy spells and there may be frequent contact with opticians and/or dentists or referrals for second opinions. The child themselves might complain about frequent visits to the doctors.

There may also be other physical signs, many of which you would pick up as a safeguarding issue with other possible causes. For example, a child who appeared to be constantly hungry or who did not appear to be receiving the advocated medical treatment. Again, there could be other reasons for these types of behaviour but the school's role is to report concerns and investigations will follow.

A child experiencing FII may have difficulties concentrating when they are in school, pre-school children may be withdrawn or hyperactive and older children and adolescents may exaggerate their own physical symptoms. They may have learnt to collude with the parent and manage a non-existent condition or even fabricate or induce illness in themselves.

Where there is a sibling in the school the DSL might talk to their teachers to see if children of different ages in the same family are presenting similar concerns. The school nurse might also be consulted and make a contribution to any initial discussions about the possibility of FII.

It is important not to approach the parent or carer if FII is suspected as they are unlikely to admit that it is taking place and may subsequently cover up any evidence. Instead, social services must be contacted.

Consult the 2008 Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced (DCSF) guidance

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, (including exclusion from home or abandonment) failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, (including the use of inadequate care-takers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Definitions taken from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2015).

## **Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying is thought to result in up to 12 child suicides each year.

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'. It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g. sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

All incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti bullying procedures. All students and parents receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Principal and the DSP will consider implementing child protection procedures.

## **Faith abuse and honour based violence**

Honour based violence is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and / or community by breaking their honour code.

For young victims it is a form of child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

It can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members. Women, men and younger members of the family can all be involved in the abuse.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be

perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

*Taken from KCSIE 2020*

Principles for consistently tackling Child Exploitation across Merseyside (taken from the Pan Merseyside Protocol):

- When a child has been exploited, it is never the child's fault.
- All agencies across Merseyside should use a VPRF1 or Multi-Agency Referral Form to make a referral to the Front door/MASH
- Referrals should always be made to the local geographical area where the child is currently residing
- If the child is 'looked after' and placed out of their Local Authority geographical boundary, the child's allocated social worker from their home authority must always be informed that a VPRF1 or MARF has been made in relation to Child Exploitation concerns
- Upon receipt of the VPRF1 or MARF in relation to Child Exploitation concerns, the local response will ensure a multi- agency information sharing and/or meeting takes place, in accordance with the level of risk initially identified. If there is risk of significant harm then a sec 47 strategy meeting must be convened which involves social care, police and partner agencies working with the child/family and CE flags can be actioned from this meeting for police and CSC systems.

## **Modern slavery**

Modern Slavery includes the trafficking of people, forced labour, servitude and slavery.

Children (those aged under 18) are considered victims of trafficking whether or not they have been coerced, or paid to secure their compliance. They need only have been recruited, received or harboured for the purpose of exploitation. Modern slavery is an international crime affecting an estimated 45.8 million people around the world.

Types:

- **Sexual exploitation** – This includes but is not limited to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, forced prostitution and the abuse of children for the production of child abuse images/videos.
- **Domestic servitude** – This involves a victim being forced to work in predominantly private households, usually performing domestic chores and childcare duties.
- **Forced labour** – Victims may be forced to work long hours for little or no pay in poor conditions under verbal or physical threats of violence to them or their families.

- **Criminal exploitation** – This can be understood as the exploitation of a person to commit a crime, such as pick-pocketing, shop-lifting, cannabis cultivation, drug trafficking and other similar activities that are subject to penalties and imply financial gain for the trafficker.

If we believe a student is a victim of Modern Slavery, a property that raises suspicion, or a business might be using forced labour, we will call the helpline on 0800 0121 700 and the police –. If a child is believed to be at risk, immediately contact the police and the local authority children's services.

### **Gangs and youth violence**

See Preventing youth violence and gang involvement Practical advice for schools and colleges (2013)

Defining a gang is difficult. They tend to fall into three categories: Peer Groups, Street Gangs and Organised Crime Groups. It can be common for groups of children and young people to gather together in public places to socialise. Although some Peer group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour and youth offending, these activities should not be confused with the serious violence of a street gang.

A street gang can be described as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of children who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.

A street gang will engage in criminal activity and violence and may lay claim over territory (not necessarily geographical but it can include an illegal economy territory); They have some form of identifying structure featuring a hierarchy usually based on age, physical strength, propensity to violence or older sibling rank. There may be certain rites involving antisocial or criminal behaviour or sex acts in order to become part of the gang. They are in conflict with other similar gangs.

An Organised criminal group is a group of individuals normally led by adults for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). This involves serious and organised criminality by a hard core of violent gang members who exploit vulnerable young people and adult. This may also involve the movement and selling of drugs and money across the country, known as 'county lines' because it extends across county boundaries. Young men and women may be at risk of sexual exploitation in these groups.

There is a distinction between organised crime groups and street gangs based on the level of criminality, organisation, planning and control, however, there are significant links between different levels of gangs. Activity can include street gang's involvement in drug dealing on behalf of organised criminal groups and the sexual abuse of girls and boys by organised criminal groups.

Children may be involved in more than one 'gang', with some cross-border movement, and may not stay in a 'gang' for significant periods of time.

Safeguarding should focus on young people who are /vulnerable of making the transition to gang involvement as well as those already involved in gangs. Staff should be aware of particular risks to young people involved in gangs from violence and weapons; drugs and sexual exploitation. A child who is affected by gang activity or serious youth violence can be at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Girls and boys may be particularly at risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Sign posting;**

- Child withdrawn from family;
- Sudden loss of interest in school or change in behaviour. Decline in attendance or academic achievement (although it should be noted that some gang members will maintain a good attendance record to avoid coming to notice);
- Being emotionally 'switched off', but also containing frustration / rage;
- Starting to use new or unknown slang words;
- Holding unexplained money or possessions;
- Staying out unusually late without reason, or breaking parental rules consistently;
- Sudden change in appearance – dressing in a particular style or 'uniform' similar to that of other young people they hang around with, including a particular colour;
- Dropping out of positive activities;
- New nickname;
- Unexplained physical injuries, and/or refusal to seek / receive medical treatment for injuries;
- Graffiti style 'tags' on possessions, school books, walls;
- Constantly talking about another young person who seems to have a lot of influence over them;
- Breaking off with old friends and hanging around with one group of people;
- Associating with known or suspected gang members, closeness to siblings or adults in the family who are gang members;
- Starting to adopt certain codes of group behaviour e.g. ways of talking and hand signs;
- Expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people, some of whom may have been friends in the past;
- Being scared when entering certain areas; and
- Concerned by the presence of unknown youths in their neighbourhoods.

### **Mental health**

Students with mental health issues are initially supported pastorally. Where needed, students and parents are signposted to the necessary services. We also have an onsite counsellor where internal referrals can be made. If the safety and wellbeing of a student is an immediate cause for concern parents/carers are advised to seek medical help straight away.

## **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 school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children. The school or college should then notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

*Taken from KCSIE 2020*

## **Indicators of abuse – what you might see**

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

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

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

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

- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.
- 

**Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse.** They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important to report concerns – it is not necessary to have ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

## Peer on Peer Abuse

Keeping Children Safe in Education, (2016 revised Sep 2020) states that ‘*Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with*’ (page 15).

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

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (and cyber bullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- harmful sexual behaviour
- gender based violence
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

At the Sutton Academy we take a contextual whole school approach to peer on peer abuse. All staff are aware of the signs/indicators of this type of abuse, and understand the importance of raising concerns at the earliest possible stage. Peer on peer abuse is a topic that is covered in our PSHE sessions, and positive peer relationships are something which we regularly promote throughout school. Where necessary school will seek to involve other agencies such as children’s social care; but this would be shared with parent/guardians before doing so.

Peer on peer abuse must take into consideration gender based issues such as hazing.

Please make reference to The Sutton Academy Anti Bullying Policy.

For further information re peer on peer abuse see “Keeping Children Safe in Education, (2020)

## **Impact of abuse**

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

## **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSP as soon as possible
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a red welfare and concern form
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

Appendix 4 provides a flowchart for reporting a concern.

## **If you suspect a student is at risk of harm**

There will be occasions when you suspect that a student may be at risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. In these circumstances, you should try to give the student the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine to ask the student if they are OK or if you can help in any way.

Use CPOMS recording system to log these early concerns and discuss your concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/relevant Head of Year at the earliest opportunity. If the student does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section 'If a student discloses to you'.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned; you should discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer at the earliest opportunity.

## Early help

In safeguarding, early intervention seeks to address the issues raised in a concern, to deal with the situation an individual is faced with by looking at the root causes.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs; • has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited; • is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.

Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.

Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child

Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency co-operation to improve the welfare of all children

### **If a student discloses to you**

If a student talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know as soon as possible that you must pass the information on at the earliest opportunity:

During your conversation with the student:

- At an appropriate time tell the student that in order to help them you must pass the information on and cannot be confidential.
- Allow them to speak freely, Remain calm and do not over-react.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too.

- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Tell the student what will happen next. The student may agree to go with you to see the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the CPOMS system and alert the relevant safeguarding team
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

### **Notifying parents**

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

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

### **Referral to children's social care**

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

The DSL will hear the voice of the child to gain an understanding for each student's lived experience by ascertaining their wishes and feelings when required in this process. We also will use this so we can offer a tailored approach to meet each individual's needs.

To do this we will:

Telephone the MASH Team through the **Contact** Cares Team (**01744**) 676767 and ask for the Duty Social Worker

### **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a student's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18. The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both

victim and perpetrator. It is recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

We will endeavour to support students through our:

- Pastoral System
- PSHCE programme
- Behaviour Management Policy including Anti-Bullying. ([Policies and Procedures](#))

### **Confidentiality and sharing information**

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

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person, Principal or Chair of Trustees (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

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

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

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. All concerns will be logged on the school reporting systems CPOMS – this is secure, and only relevant pastoral staff can access this information. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

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

## **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the Principal and the Chair of Trustees are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

## Related safeguarding portfolio policies

- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Personal and intimate care
- Complaints procedure
- Anti-bullying
- Appropriate physical contact
- Whistleblowing
- SEN
- Behaviour
- Missing children
- Safer recruitment
- Managing allegations
- Grievance and disciplinary

## Appendix 1: Visiting Staff child protection information leaflet



Welcome to The Sutton Academy

### Visitors Information and Safety Advice

Please take a few minutes to read this leaflet which has been designed to protect you, our staff and students whilst you are visiting the academy. If anything has not been covered please ask. We thank you for your co-operation and hope you will enjoy your visit.

**Principal** Mr P Willerton

**Assistant Principal** Ms G Medare

**Safeguarding Officer** Mrs G Potter

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students.

We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where students are respected and valued.

We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that students receive effective support, protection and justice. While working in our academy we expect you to take care of our students and follow our procedures.

**Please sign-in both at reception on arrival and book-out when leaving, ensuring that you return your visitor's badge.**

## **Fire and Emergency Evacuation**

If the Fire Alarm sounds (a long continuous, wailing siren) please leave the building immediately by the nearest exit. Make your way round to the assembly point next to the Mound (behind the Music Block) and report to the Emergency Co-ordinator.

Please note that there is a weekly alarm test at 5.00 pm Friday.

**First Aid** is available at reception and in other areas of the academy.

**Visitor's toilets** - please ask for directions.

**Academy equipment** - please check with a member of staff before using any equipment belonging to the academy.

**Accidents and Incidents (including near misses)** - Please report any accidents or incidents that occur whilst visiting the academy.

**Parking on site** if your vehicle needs to be parked anywhere other than the car park please speak to reception. Driving speed must be no higher than 5 mph.

**Students** - Be aware that you should not establish any social contact with students or meet any student in isolation.

**Students' safety, security and well-being are our priorities. Please abide by these rules.**

## **VISITOR**

**If you have any concerns during your visit regarding the safety and well-being of our students, please ask to see the Designated Safeguarding Officer or a Senior Member of staff before you leave the site.**

**Do not question the student or try to secure evidence. Your responsibility is to report your concern, not to investigate.**

**If a student tells you something that suggests they are at risk of harm, allow them to tell you as much as they wish and let them know that you must pass the information on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.**

**If you become concerned about a student's immediate safety, notify the nearest member of staff and tell them why you are concerned. In addition, log the incident as soon as possible on CPOMS, this will notify all relevant staff.**

**If you have any questions or wish to see our Child Protection Policy please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer.**

Appendix 2: Confirmation of receipt of child protection policy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of joining school: \_\_\_\_\_

Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of induction: \_\_\_\_\_ Name

and designation of staff member responsible for induction:

\_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I have received and read the school child protection policy.

I have been made aware of my duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

The procedure for reporting concerns about a student has been explained to me.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return this form to:

**G Medare /Gemma Potter**

### Appendix 3: Images consent form



#### **Student and Parent Consent for the Use of Images**

There is evidence to suggest that some people who are a risk to children may identify potential victims from images (photographs or video recordings) and accompanying personal information that is in the public domain, including school brochures and websites, and local and national media.

To protect our students, we do not publish their full name and photograph together, we ensure children are appropriately clothed for photographs and we do not allow commercial or media photographer's unsupervised access to students.

In signing this form, students and parents give consent for the school or someone commissioned by the school to take and use photographs and video recordings for educational purposes, to record events and to publicise the work of the school on our website, in the school prospectus and in local or national media.

Name of student

Date of birth

Signature of student

Date

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Name of parent or carer

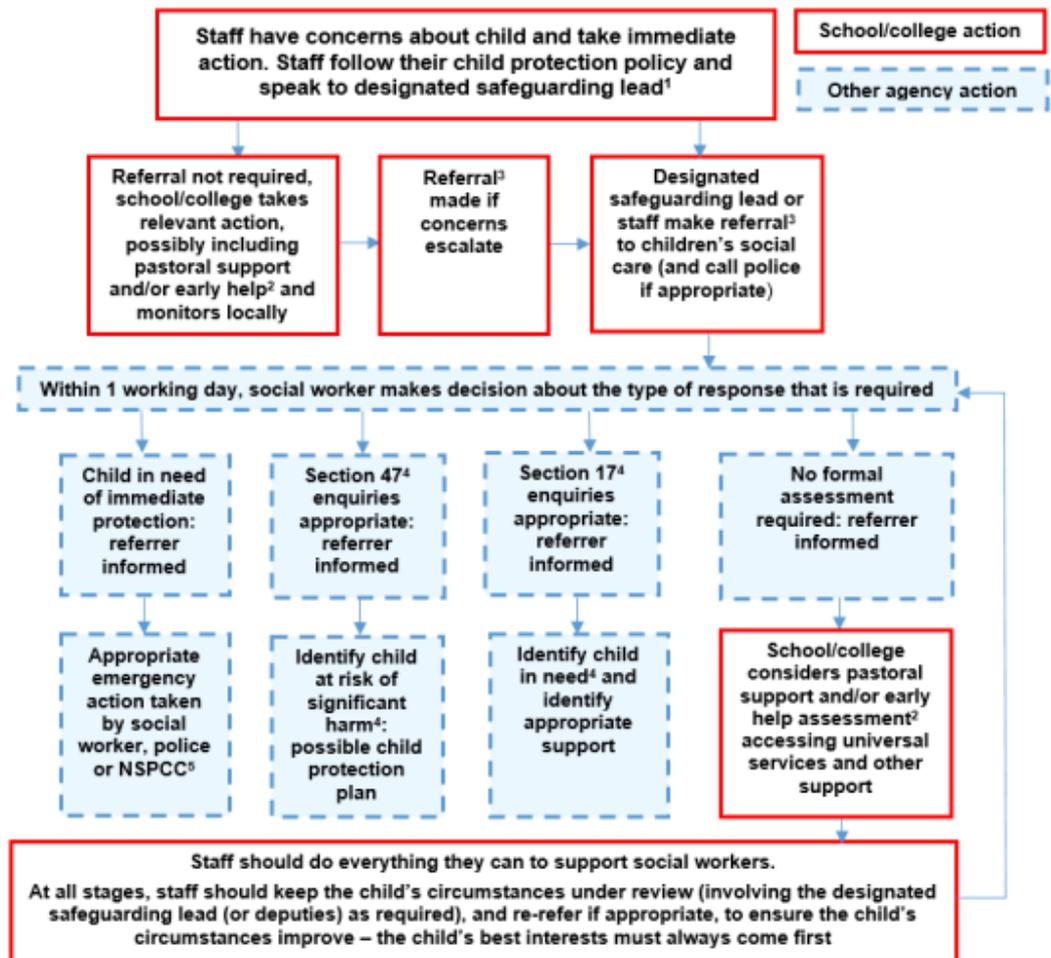
Relationship to the student

Signature of parent or carer

Student's address

Telephone:

### Actions where there are concerns about a child



## Appendix 5: Essential contacts

Name and role:	Address, telephone and email address
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Gemma Medare 01744 678859 <a href="mailto:Gemma.medare@thesuttonacademy.org.uk">Gemma.medare@thesuttonacademy.org.uk</a>
Principal	Paul Willerton 01744 678859 <a href="mailto:paul.willerton@thesuttonacademy.org.uk">paul.willerton@thesuttonacademy.org.uk</a>
Nominated trustee	Nicola Kearney <a href="mailto:Nicola.kearney@sthelens.org.uk">Nicola.kearney@sthelens.org.uk</a>
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Gemma Potter 01744 673573 <a href="mailto:gemma.potter@thesuttonacademy.org.uk">gemma.potter@thesuttonacademy.org.uk</a>
LADO	sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk 01744 671262
Human resources	Rachel Lomax <a href="mailto:RachelLomax@sthelens.gov.uk">RachelLomax@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
Children's social care	First Response 01744 676600 Atlas House 01744 671290
Children's social care referrals	Referrals made by Safeguarding Officer
Out of hours duty team	0845 050 0148
Health authority	School Nurse – Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust Halton and St Helens Division Irwin Road Clinic Irwin Road St Helens WA9 3UG Tel: 01744 811592 Fax: 0151 2893097
CAMHS	Referrals made by Safeguarding Officer
NSPCC helpline	0808 800 5000