

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Last review date:		September 2023	
Next review date:		September 2024	
Statutory Policy:		Yes	
Date	Version	Reason for change	Review
		Statutory change	Annually

To be read alongside all relevant BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy policies and procedures including Behaviour Handbook, Anti-bullying Policy and E-Safety Policy

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1. Key contacts

Designated Safeguarding Staff:

If you are concerned about a child please report **immediately** to:

Miss Michelle Hill (Designated Safeguarding Lead and Assistant Principal) or in her absence;

Miss Megan Knight (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Pastoral Manager).

Prevent single point of contact (SPOC) – Miss Michelle Hill

Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children – Miss Michelle Hill

Mental Health Lead – Miss Michelle Hill

Safeguarding Governor – Hilary Weston-Jones

Social Care Contacts:

Birmingham Children's Services: 0121 303 1888

Sandwell Children's Services: 0121 569 3100

Solihull MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0121 788 4300.

Walsall MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0300 555 2866

Birmingham Prevent Manager: Waqar Ahmed (waqar.ahmed@birmingham.gov.uk) 0121 303 7682 / 07557 203290

Local Authority Education Safeguarding Officer: Angela James (Angela.James@birmingham.gov.uk)
07510369871/Local Authority Website <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schoolsafeguarding>

LADO Contacts

Local Authority LADO: 0121 675 1669 (Ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

2. Introduction and Context

2.1 Our Responsibilities

2.1.1 BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of our students. We believe that not only do we have a statutory duty to ensure that we safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in our care, but also a moral duty. We expect everyone who works in our Academy to share this commitment.

2.1.2 The protection of our students from suffering or the likelihood of suffering significant harm is the responsibility of **all** staff within our Academy, superseding any other considerations. All staff take welfare concerns seriously and always act in the best interests of the child and young person. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a student in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or at immediate risk.

2.1.3 In this policy, we clearly outline the responsibilities of all adults working in the Academy to be aware of their duty and how to act upon any concerns with regard to child safeguarding. (Children includes everyone under the age of 18 and students who are over 18 but still attend the Academy.)

2.1.4 Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action. They must share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

2.1.5 All staff **must** read [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) (Part one and Annex A), Staff Conduct Policy, and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and sign to acknowledge they have read and understand these documents.

2.1.6 The Principal, Governors and all staff will receive child protection training which is regularly updated.

2.1.7 If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. They should follow this safeguarding and child protection policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In the absence of the DSL, staff should speak to the Deputy DSL/Principal.

2.1.8 The Academy takes its responsibility to safeguard young people seriously. Failure to follow these reporting procedures may result in disciplinary action.

2.1.9 This policy can be found on the Academy's website. It is also available for staff on Microsoft Teams, along with supporting documentation and guidance.

2.2 Our Principles

2.2.1 **All** staff, governors and volunteers should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

2.2.2 Protect our students and staff by recognising signs and symptoms of students suffering harm or likely to suffer harm at the earliest possible moment to prevent concerns from escalating.

2.2.3 Create a culture of vigilance by maintaining a 'child-centred' approach, listening to the voice of the child and always acting in their best interests.

2.2.4 Ensure that students recognise when they are at risk and know how to get help when they need it.

2.2.5 Firmly embed safeguarding in the curriculum, including online safety.

2.2.6 Provide a safe, stimulating and resilient environment built on mutual respect and shared values, where students can learn and develop.

2.2.7 Work effectively with parents, agencies and other professionals as required by [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#) and in line with the guidance [NPCC When to call the police](#).

2.3 Definition of Safeguarding

2.3.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purpose of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment by taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3. Indicators of abuse and Neglect

It is important to remember that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

3.1 Types of abuse and neglect

3.1.1 Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children (also referred to as peer-on-peer abuse/child-on-child abuse).

3.1.2 Physical abuse: May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, suffocating, burning or scalding, drowning 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 whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy.

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

3.1.4 Sexual abuse: It 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, 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, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not only perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.⁵

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

3.2 Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm

3.2.1 All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug-taking or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues that all staff should be aware of include:

- Student' health and safety
- Bullying, including cyber-bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and so on)
- Racist abuse
- Homophobic and transphobic bullying
- Harassment and discrimination
- Domestic violence
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Serious violence
- Gender or honour-based violence (including FGM)

- Teenage relationship abuse
- Use of physical intervention
- Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Drug and substance misuse
- Educational visits
- Gangs and youth/serious violence
- Internet or e-safety
- Issues which may be specific to our local area or population, for example gang activity
- Child-on-child abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, e.g. sexting (youth produced imagery)
- Private fostering
- Children who go missing from education
- Children's mental health
- Children required to give evidence in criminal courts
- Children with family members in prison.

3.2.2 Further information about specific safeguarding issues are found in addendum 1.

3.2.3 The Academy delivers safeguarding across the curriculum to its students. This allows students to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it and to support students to keep physically and mentally healthy. How we achieve this is found in addendum 2.

3.3 Victims and alleged perpetrator(s).

3.3.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, in places, uses the term '**victim**'. It is a widely recognised and understood term. It is important that Academies recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Ultimately, Trust Academies should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child or young person is most comfortable.

3.3.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, also uses the term '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' and where appropriate '**perpetrator(s)**'. These are widely used and recognised terms. However, each Academy will think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children or young people, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. What is appropriate and which term to use will be decided on a case by case basis.

3.3.3 All Academy staff should be aware that children and young people may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

3.3.4 For example, children and young people may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers.

3.3.5 This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child or young person. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people to facilitate communication.

4. Procedures in Response to Disclosures or Concerns

4.1. Each Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep students safe online.

4.1.1 If any staff member suspects that a child may be a victim of abuse, they must **immediately** inform the DSL of their concerns. Abuse can be of a sexual, emotional or physical nature. It can also be the result of neglect.

4.1.2 In most circumstances when a child alleges abuse the DSL will notify the parents at the earliest opportunity. However, in certain circumstances (usually in response to an allegation of physical or sexual abuse within the family) a referral to local authority children's social care (and thereby to the Police) may be made first.

4.1.3 All staff should have an awareness of any children who may benefit from 'Early Help' support to prevent concerns from escalating. Staff should discuss any concerns with the DSL.

4.1.4 All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

4.1.5 The DSL will log all concerns and work with the appropriate agencies e.g. Children or Adult Social Care. The Academy receive advice and guidance from their local Safeguarding Advisors and use the common referral procedures available online as per Local Authority.

4.1.6 If a student personally confides an incident and only wishes to speak to you, you should:

- Inform them that you have a responsibility to report all incidents of abuse
- Reassure them they have done the right thing
- Leave questioning to the Police / Children or Adult Services. If you contaminate evidence with incorrect questioning, you may put the child at risk
- Be honest about what happens next. If a child has told you about an incident, it is because they want help and look to you to give help.
- Contact the DSL, personally and immediately (in their absence, the Deputy DSL/Principal)
- Make detailed notes immediately (no later than one hour later) of what the child has said quoting the child's words verbatim. This referral should be completed on My Concern and if you have handwritten any notes, these should be scanned and attached to your referral
- Be aware that if you are unable to speak to the DSL (e.g. out of Academy hours), you have a duty to report your concerns to Children/Adult Services.

4.1.7 All staff are aware that should a child disclose that they are a victim of female genital mutilation, a phone call to the Police, dialling 999, must be made immediately.

4.1.8 The member of staff should not:

- Investigate the matter independently, especially through questioning the student
- Implement Child Protection procedures without first consulting the DSL unless, and only in exceptional circumstances such as in emergency or when there is a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to Children/Adult Services. If a referral is made, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible
- Discuss the disclosure with anyone unless instructed by DSL or Deputy DSL.

4.1.9 If a member of staff is concerned that a student is at risk according to any of the definitions, they should discuss the matter with the Academy's DSL, who will:

- Collect any other relevant information from colleagues / other agencies

- Make a decision as to whether or not there are sufficient grounds to refer the matter to the appropriate agencies
- Inform the member of staff and others concerned of the decision and future action to be taken, where appropriate
- If, at any point, there is a risk of **immediate serious harm** to a child, make a referral to Children or Adult Social Care **immediately**.

4.1.10 The DSL (supported by other safeguarding staff), will call Early Help meetings and when necessary, Multi-agency Professionals' Meetings in order to support early intervention for children and families in need. Children Services will be consulted at every stage.

4.1.11 The Academy will also have regard to extra-familial harm as we are aware that children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

4.1.12 Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Academy and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

4.1.13 The Academy will send a representative to Child Protection Conferences and will forward full written reports if attendance is not possible. The DSL receives and acts upon any updates or minutes. The DSL will ensure participation by an appropriate member of staff in all Core Group activities.

4.1.14 The DSL will liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff. Safeguarding training will be completed as part of the new staff induction process.

4.1.15 The DSL will ensure that children will have an 'appropriate adult' present if there is police involvement.

4.1.16 The Academy will also work with agencies to ensure the monitoring of children not on the Child Protection List (not deemed to be in need of a child protection plan), but who may be living in risky situations - through a Child in Need plan or an Early Help Assessment.

4.1.17 If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

4.2 Industry providers and work placements

4.2.1 Providers have an obligation to provide a safe working environment for their staff and work experience students and a responsibility to protect students.

4.2.2 Industry professionals should be competent in their work role, mature in their attitudes and able to establish a good working relationship with young people.

4.2.3 Workplace providers will receive a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and information relating to their responsibility for safeguarding.

4.2.4 A member of the Senior Leadership Team will carry out risk assessments and include safeguarding discussions as part of workplace reviews with students.

4.2.5 Industry providers will receive information relating to safe practice in the workplace and safeguarding contact details.

4.2.6 An appropriate level of supervision of young people must be provided, at all times.

4.2.7 The Academy must be notified immediately of any accident pertaining to the young person while on placement.

4.2.8 The Academy must be notified immediately if the young person fails to attend their placement.

4.2.9 The Academy must be notified immediately of any instance of indiscipline that requires the young person to be removed from the workplace and returned to the Academy. The Academy and workplace provider will agree the best course of action and will notify the parent/carer where appropriate.

4.2.10 If any student makes an allegation during or following working with industry professionals about mistreatment, it may have to be referred to an outside agency for investigation. It is important to obtain a statement from the student, with permission if it is to be referred outside the Academy.

5. Internal Communication

5.1.1 All child safeguarding concerns/issues will be **CONFIDENTIAL**. Sharing of relevant information to staff will be strictly at the discretion of the DSL following the guidance issued by HM Government July 2018 - [‘Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services’ \(DfE 2018\)](#).

5.1.2 Information in relation to a student should not be kept “Confidential” if it is obtained through an external route. For example, a member of staff learnt of a concern through a social encounter with a parent.

6. External Communication

6.1.1 In line with ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023’, data protection is not a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.

6.1.2. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent. (Keeping Children Safe in Education September, 2023)

6.1.3 All Academies follow the guidance in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023’ regarding transferring child protection files if a child leaves the Academy.

7. Allegations Against Adults and Whistleblowing

7.1.1 Whistleblowing is the act of disclosing wrongdoing. Please see BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy Whistleblowing Policy for further information.

7.1.2 Any allegations of abuse by a member of staff, supply teacher or volunteer should be reported directly to the Principal, who will implement locally agreed procedures. The first priority for the Principal will be to contact the Chief Executive Officer and the LA appointed Designated Officer (LADO), before any other action is taken, including informing the adult concerned.

7.1.3 In the event of the allegation being made against the Principal, the Chief Executive Officer of the BOA Group should be informed (or in her absence the Chair of The Board of Trustees). The Chief Executive Officer will seek advice from the Local Authority before any other action is taken. The Chief Executive Officer will then manage the allegation. Further guidance can be found in (Part Four) of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

7.1.4 On the conclusion of a case, the Academy will abide by its legal duty to make a referral to the DBS any individual who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult (‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ September 2023).

7.1.5 Reporting low-level concerns (as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education) must be reported in the same way as allegations which meet the harms test, i.e. Principal or, if about the Principal, Chair of Governors.

7.1.6 Policies and processes are in place to deal with concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold or “low level concerns” as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. The DSL keeps a record of all low-level concerns in cases which concern a member of staff/supply staff/contractor or a volunteer. The record includes details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, action taken and the name of the individual sharing their concerns (if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible).

8. Procedures in Relation to Management and Recruitment of Staff

8.1.1 We acknowledge that Safer Recruitment is an integrated element of safeguarding and that the principles are on-going through induction, monitoring and performance management.

8.1.2 Further information is found in the addendum 2 entitled ‘procedures in relation to management and recruitment of staff’.

9. Governance

9.1.1 All BOA Group Trustees and members of the Governance Advisory Board have an Enhanced DBS Check (without barred list, unless they are additionally in regulated activity).

9.1.2 Trustees fulfil legal obligations to provide a secure learning environment for its students.

9.1.3 Trustees and members of the Governance Advisory Board receive training in their responsibilities for safeguarding. This includes ensuring there are policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote student’ welfare and supports the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This includes ensuring:

- Statutory safer recruitment procedures are adhered to
- All staff undergo safeguarding training and child protection training at induction and this is regularly updated **and delivered to staff by the DSL**, in line with advice from the local Safeguarding Children’s Board. **The DSL also provides CPD for all staff on the most current safeguarding issues**
- Appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to safeguard students from accessing potential harmful and inappropriate online material from the Academy IT system (please refer to the Academy’s E-Safety Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policies). Their effectiveness is reviewed regularly. **This includes:**
 - **Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training**
 - **Reviewing the [DfE’s filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards**
- Students are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- The Trust appointed a Nominated Lead for Safeguarding and E-Safety. They are responsible for liaising with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Leads over matters regarding child protection issues. The role is strategic and does not involve concerns about individual students
- The Trustees have allocated the role of Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after, or previously looked after, to the Designated Lead. This is because the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse/neglect. The Designated Lead works with the Virtual School Head Teacher to identify individual students needs and to develop and implement a Personal Educational Plan for every pupil in Local Authority care

- The Trust acknowledges its retained responsibility for any activities carried out with children on site or using the Academy's facilities - even if delivered by an external body or organisation. In such circumstances, the governing body satisfies itself that the group or organisation has its own safeguarding policy and procedures for safer recruitment of staff or leaders, or that the organisation signs up to the policy and procedure of the Academy. Therefore, the Trustees and Principal will only grant permission for use of the premises to recognised bodies (usually a national affiliation and a written statement of their adherence to safeguarding principles).

Addendum 1

Further information about safeguarding:

Childhood Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17-year olds.

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Childhood Mental Health

Mental illness and suicidal thoughts can affect anyone, of any age, of any background, at any time. Like with physical illnesses, people don't choose to have a mental health problem. It can be difficult to know if a child is suffering as they often keep it to themselves.

Some of the signs to be aware of may be:

- Becoming withdrawn from family and friends
- Persistent low moods and unhappiness
- Tearfulness and irritability
- Worries that stop them carrying out day to day tasks
- Sudden outbursts of anger directed towards others or themselves
- Loss of interest in activities that they used to enjoy
- Problems eating or sleeping
- Physical indicators, such as self-harm.

Any member of staff who suspects a child or young person is suffering with their mental health should share their concerns with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead**.

All staff should be aware that 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.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they are experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Further information to support young people and their mental health can be found using the following links:

<https://youngminds.org.uk>

<https://stem4.org.uk>

www.mind.org.uk

www.place2be.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

www.barnardos.org.uk

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools/colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children with Family Members in Prison

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

Children Missing/absent from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child **being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions**, going missing from education **can be** a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding possibilities. The Pastoral Team follows the Academy's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation, and to prevent the risks of them going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging, but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or community.

It is therefore essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as; travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

Further information and support, includes:

- **Guidance on school attendance 'Working together to improve school attendance' including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.**
- **Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: Children Missing Education.**

The Academy will inform their Local Authority of any student who is going to be removed from the admission register where the student:

- Has been taken out of the Academy by their parents and the Academy has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the Academy at which they are registered
- Has been certified as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend the Academy before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the Academy after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the Academy at the end of that period
- Has been permanently excluded.

The Academy will inform the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend the Academy regularly, adhering to the authority's guidelines. The Academy will carry out 'safe and well' checks where necessary, in discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Academy will always liaise with, and take advice from Children's Services.

The Academy will inform the Local Authority of any first day absence of a Looked After Child, where contact with carers could not be made.

For further information and guidance please refer to the relevant Academy's policies in conjunction with this policy. For further guidance on **Children Missing from Education**, please also refer to the Academy's Attendance Policy.

Parents/Carers **must** ensure the Academy has at least two emergency contacts for their child.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or physical health issues

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff in our Academy recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- These children are more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying) than other children
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children and young people with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and the SENCO or the named person with oversight for SEND in the academy.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

Cybercrime

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

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded.
- Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

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

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or Deputy) should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime

Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. 146 Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyberenabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

Child on Child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer/child on child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of the Academy and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in the Academy, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

All staff and students should understand that we have a zero-tolerance for child on child abuse and that we take such incidents very seriously, engaging with relevant external agencies where appropriate.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Staff are clear as to the Academy policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse as defined in the Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Handbook, and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Staff will ensure that any disclosure of child-on-child abuse from a student, or indeed behaviours that have been witnessed are reported via **CPOMS** and a conversation held with the DSL as soon as possible to allow the incident to be investigated in the correct manner and by trained staff.

Students who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others within the academy community through a multi-agency risk assessment. We ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims

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 the financial benefit to other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

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. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex
- Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).
- 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; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. 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, 13 and access to economic or other resources.

Child Criminal Exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim wants or needs and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines see section 18), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts/money or new possessions

- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- Children with unexplained injuries
- Children in possession of multiple mobile phones.

There are some indicators that will differ for male and female victims. Staff should be mindful of female pupils wearing inappropriate clothing, found to be carrying a large number of condoms on their person, or who fall pregnant. Male pupils who are found to have committed offences, become homeless or disclosed their sexuality are at greater risk of vulnerability and therefore greater risk of exploitation.

County Lines

County lines is the police term for gangs and organised criminal networks supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. It involves child criminal exploitation (CCE) as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money.

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons.

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

- Can affect any child or young person under 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.

One of the key factors found in most cases of county lines exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (e.g. carrying drugs in return for something). Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or clothes) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived friendship or affection).

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, children's homes and care homes.

The national picture on county lines continues to develop but there are recorded cases of the use of social media to make initial contact with children and young people.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial; and
- Emotional.

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child’s circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child’s needs.

Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children’s social care if they are concerned about a child’s welfare.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Refer to page 147 of KCSIE 2023 for more information on Operation Encompass and the National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge and additional advice on identifying children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

Elective Home Education

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents’ decision to home educate to be made with their child’s best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended so that schools must inform their Local Authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from the Academy, with a view to educating at home, we will liaise with the Local Authority and relevant key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the

parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important where the child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (part 5, para 455).

HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context. When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors.

Sexual behaviour between children and young people can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is prepubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector.

It is effective safeguarding practice for the DSL (and deputy) to have a good understanding of HSB. This could form part of their safeguarding training. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, drafting and implementing an effective child protection policy and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Homelessness

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

In most cases we will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and appropriate referrals should be made based on the child's circumstances.

'Honour Based' Abuse (HBA)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and treated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

There is 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.

Possible warning signs that FGM might be about to take place are:

- Mention of a female relative coming to visit
- A girl becoming easily distressed, fearful or anxious
- Referencing FGM (or its other alternative names)
- A child talking about a special procedure/ceremony that is going to take place
- The family making preparations to take the girl abroad 'on holiday' e.g. arranging vaccinations or requesting a prolonged absence from school.

There is a range of symptoms of FGM that could consist of:

- Severe and/or constant pain
- Infections, such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- Infertility
- Bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- Difficulties urinating or incontinence.

Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Teachers must personally report to the police (dialling 999), after informing the DSL, if they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Our Academies can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: [Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage \(pages 75-80 of KCSIE 2023 which focus on the role of schools and colleges\)](#) and, [Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(\[www.gov.uk\]\(http://www.gov.uk\)\)](#).

Staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The Academy will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, we will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The DSL should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Looked after and previously looked after children may also have additional barriers to overcome in relation to safeguarding. The staff member at the Academy with responsibility for LAC and PLAC children is named in section 1: Key Contacts.

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation - technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers the Academy to protect and educate the whole community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm – this can include sending nude images and/or semi-nude images
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams

Please also refer to the Academy's E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

As our students increasingly work online, it is essential that they are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, including when they are online at home. The Academy use specialist online monitoring software to ensure that inappropriate content or sites are not accessed by students or staff. Please also refer to the Academy's 'Staff Conduct Policy'.

The Academy uses specialist online monitoring software to ensure that inappropriate content or sites are not accessed by pupils or staff on school devices and school networks. Please also refer to the 'Employee Code of Conduct'.

The safeguarding and online training that our Academy staff receive will include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

As outlined in our E-safety policy, the DSL take responsibility in this area and have a full understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes.

The Academy IT Department will ensure that our Academies are meeting the [DFE's filtering and monitoring standards](#). The Governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding will pay due regard to the DFE's filtering and monitoring standards and consider how our Academies are meeting these standards during their annual safeguarding audit.

The Academy will cascade information regarding keeping children safe online regularly to parents/carers.

Preventing Radicalisation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). The Internet and use of social media has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

All staff should be aware of the signs and symptoms of a young person being at risk of becoming radicalised:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- Their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- Possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups)
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology
- Communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology.

The examples above are not exhaustive and vulnerability may manifest itself in other ways.

Concerns may result in a referral to the Channel panel. The Channel panel is a voluntary process which supports people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

The Academy value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make

children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. The Academy is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

We seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to the Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our Academy's safeguarding approach. Please refer to our 'Radicalisation and Extremism' policy and our 'Prevent' risk assessment.

- Terrorism is an action that endangers or cause serious violence to a person/people, causes serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- **If you have any concerns about any of the above please report immediately to the DSL.**

Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made privately, (without the involvement of a local authority) where a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child.

Parents and private foster parents both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Academy staff should notify the DSL if they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The Academy will notify the Local Authority of the circumstances and the Local Authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child. Local authorities have a duty to satisfy themselves that the welfare of children who are, or will be, privately fostered within their area is being, or will be, satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime.

These may include increased absence from the Academy, 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 and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school/academy, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Sexting (Youth Produced Imagery)

Sexting is the sharing of sexual imagery (including nudes and semi-nudes) by young people.

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools/academies and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

The Academy adheres to guidance from the [UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS 2020\)](#) which acknowledges the current broad usage of the term 'sexting' and introduces the phrase 'youth produced sexual imagery or 'youth involved sexual imagery'.

The guidance covers the following incidents:

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

The advice does not cover the sharing of sexual imagery of people under the age of 18 by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse and requires immediate police involvement.

The advice does not cover a person under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which do not contain images.

All incidents of youth produced sexual imagery or youth involved sexual imagery are dealt with as safeguarding concerns. Staff must follow the safeguarding referral system if any such incident comes to their attention.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

As set out in Part one Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, all staff working with children at our Academy are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are **never acceptable**.

It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously, offered appropriate support and reassured that we will work with agencies to keep them safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours

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

The Academy adheres to guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (part 5) when dealing with an incident of sexual violence and sexual harassment between students.

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

What is the difference between sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual Violence

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

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

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

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

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:

A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is consent?

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

Academy staff should be aware that:

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual Harassment

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

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

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

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

The response to a report from a child is important. The Academy is aware that how we respond to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. If we fail to recognise, acknowledge or understand the scale of harassment and abuse, or even downplay some of these behaviours, we are risking this leading to a culture of unacceptable behaviour. It is **essential** that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should **never** be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

An example of what to say to a child if they disclose to a member of staff is given below:

"Thank you for sharing this with me. You have been very brave in telling me and I appreciate how difficult that will have been. You have done nothing wrong, and I am so proud of you for sharing this today. It is really important that I pass this information onto (DSL name) so that we can support you"

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

The Academy incorporates relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education within the curriculum. Please also refer to the Academy Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy.

Addendum 2

Procedures in Relation to Visitors to the Academy Site

- Visitors are required to report directly to the reception by the main entrance
- Once inside the Academy, all visitors must sign in via the signing in screen
- The Safeguarding Advice for Visitors Booklet must be read
- A visitor's lanyard will be issued which is to be worn at all times
- Any unaccompanied visitors on site who are not recognised must be politely approached, questioned about their business in the academy and escorted immediately to reception
- The Academy reserve the right to refuse entry or terminate a visit at any time.

Classification of Visitors

- Visitors can be classified according to their degree of access to children. A red lanyard signifies that the visitor must be escorted at all times, by a member of staff. A green lanyard signifies that the visitor has an enhanced DBS clearance and is added to the Single Central Register (SCR) can move around the building unaccompanied. **A grey lanyard signifies that the visitor has an enhanced DBS clearance and has not been added to the Single Central Register (SCR) but can move around the building unaccompanied. These would include professionals such as the Police, Children Services and National Health Services.**

People working with children

- Industry professionals, LA employees, school nurses, volunteers, Children's Services staff
- Unless the visit is expected or the visitor is well known to the person admitting them, authority must be obtained from a member of the Leadership Team before allowing access to the Academy
- The identity of the visitor must be confirmed
- All such visitors will have enhanced DBS clearance
- If the clearance is not held by us, we will require confirmation that appropriate clearance has been obtained and the visitor will wear a badge issued by the organisation holding their DBS clearance
- Material and key messages planned by guest speakers will be vetted prior to the event and, where appropriate, a social media check will be carried out

Escorted visitors

Examples: parents/carers, prospective parents, job candidates.

- These people must be **accompanied at all times.**

Addendum 3

Procedures in Relation to Management and Recruitment of Staff

Our recruitment procedure pays full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2023 and our safer recruitment practice includes: scrutinising applicants; verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications; obtaining professional and character references; checking previous employment history and ensuring that the candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes interviews and undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Additional checks are carried out on applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK to ensure any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

As part of the shortlist process the Academy will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the Academy may want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Relevant staff undertake Safer Recruitment training and there is always at least one person on every interview panel who has completed Safer Recruitment training.

A central record is maintained within the Academy of all staff and teacher trainees, indicating whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed / certificate obtained: identity; barred list; enhanced DBS; prohibition from teaching; qualifications; the person's right to work in the UK.

Where checks are carried out on volunteers, the details will be recorded on the single central register.

The specific vulnerability of supply staff and volunteers is recognised by the Academy and they are appropriately supported by senior staff. Provisions include issue of guidelines of our Behaviour Management Procedures and Child Safeguarding Procedures to all supply staff and volunteers whilst they are engaging with the students in the Academy.

The Academy will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our academy.

All members of staff (including governors and trustees) undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction (including online safety), followed up by regular updates including annual refresher training to ensure they are fully briefed on safeguarding and child protection developments. Staff induction includes awareness sessions on the Safeguarding Policy, the Academy's Behaviour Handbook and the response from schools when a child goes missing from education.

In addition:

- All staff and volunteers receive Level 1 Basic Awareness Safeguarding Children and Young People training at least every 2 years, delivered by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding staff. **This includes online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring.**
- Members of staff also receive training to raise their awareness of appropriate behaviour in relation to physical contact, professional relationships and so on, in order to keep pupils safe and to keep staff safe from inappropriate allegations (see Staff Conduct Policy).
- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies receive Level 2 Advanced Training every 2 years. Designated Safeguarding Lead receives regular training, at least annually, to keep up to date with any developments relevant to the role which includes:
 - Management/support for the Early Help process
 - Providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters

- Taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- Contributing to the assessment of children
- Liaising with the Local Authority and working with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (July 2018) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2023.

There may be times when adults in our Academy, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children. The Principal requires the adult involved in any such incident to report this to them **immediately** so it can be recorded appropriately.

NB: Physical intervention is appropriate in line with guidelines in section 50A of the Education Act 1996.

Members of staff are aware of their rights, responsibilities, duties and powers relating to managing student behaviour in the Academy (see Policy for the Use of Control & Reasonable Force) and during activities offsite. They are also aware of the need to **report** issues for action by the Academy Leadership, even when these occur beyond the Academy and other than during an offsite activity - if there are safeguarding implications for the individual children involved, other children or members of the public.

NB: These powers and those of the Principal to take action against a child who causes a problem even beyond the academy and outside academy hours are outlined in the Education & Inspections Act 2006.

Staff relationships and associations in and out of the Academy (and online) may have implications for the safeguarding of students. Staff should discuss any changes to personal circumstances with the DSL and/or Principal if it may impact the safeguarding of any student.

Addendum 4

BOS Stage and Screen Production Academy

Safeguarding through the Curriculum

Student safeguarding and the promotion of Fundamental British Values are at the heart of all our work at BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy and great importance is placed on identifying opportunities within the curriculum for students to learn about safeguarding.

We are committed to ensuring that our students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the academy's core values alongside the fundamental British Values gives students the chance to experience life in all its diversity, to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills that significantly impact on personal development, behaviour and welfare and equip every student with the knowledge and skills required for personal safeguarding.

During their time at the Academy students cover key topics in pathway, tutor time, assemblies and Personal and Professional Development collapsed days. The following topics are examples of the kinds of issues we cover; cyberbullying, British culture, world cultures, sexual health, British values, homosexuality, homophobia, gender identity, healthy relationships, free speech, internet safety, drugs/alcohol education, the economy, the rule of law, government, multi-culturalism, human rights, the media, work-related learning and more.

To assist in the delivery of these topics, we have worked with organisations such as Birmingham Pause, Birmingham Mind and the School Nurse Team (mental health, healthy relationships), Diversity Role Models (LGBTQ+), Umbrella (healthy relationships), Birmingham and Wolverhampton University (careers), West Midlands Police (anti-social behaviour). We are keen that as many external providers as possible deliver sessions, to ensure that as much expertise as possible is on hand, and some on-going partnerships have been developed as a result.