



# Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2021

Policy Information	
Policy Owner	Nancy Hardwick
Issue Version	1.0
Approving Committee	Safeguarding & Wellbeing Committee
Adopted Date	1 September 2021
Review Cycle	Annual
Last Review Date	September 2021
Next Review Date	September 2022

## Adoption of the Policy

This Policy has been adopted and reviewed by the Trustees of Transforming Futures Trust

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison', is written over a horizontal line.

Signed

(Chair of Trust)

Date 14/9/21

\*\*\* All schools and colleges should have their own individual child protection policy\*\*\* (KCSiE September 2021, para 63). **COVID-19 school response**

Previous Government Covid 19 non-statutory guidance on safeguarding in schools, colleges, and other providers 2020 has been withdrawn and the Department for Education signposts schools to the 'Schools Covid 19 operational guidance' last up dated August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Should Government or LA advice alter and/or new guidance issued Courtlands Special School will review its Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and where necessary add a supporting appendix. This new addition to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy once ratified will be shared with all staff.

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<b>Summary of changes since September 2020</b>	
Title Page	Covid 19 – schools response amended to reflect withdrawal of non-statutory guidance
Contents	Contents list amended is response to changes made in policy
Safeguarding Statement p6	Sentence added to clarify the sharing of information, informing parents/carers of reporting, and making students aware of who they can talk to and that they will be taken seriously as well as identifying a zero tolerance to abuse.  Key personnel table, footnote added re: holiday/emergency contact number sharing
Para 1 Introduction	7 <sup>th</sup> bullet point to read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
Para 3 Policy Aims	Bullet points re ordered and bullet point 1 (of previous policy) now bullet points 4 and 5
Para 4 Supporting Children  Prevention and Protection	Last bullet point added – that victims will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.  4 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – peer on peer/sexual violence and harassment and consent added to examples
Para 5 Safe School, Safe Staff	1 <sup>st</sup> bullet point – ‘governors’ added and reference to the sharing of Annex A for those staff not working directly with children as well as reading Annex B 9 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – new statement – all staff will understand their role in early help 13 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – Annex A changed to B
Para 6 Roles & Responsibilities The DSL School Staff	4 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – reference made to Annex A if suitable  5 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – restructured 8 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – new statement – victims will be reassured
Para 8 Child Protection Procedures  If staff are concerned about a child’s welfare	1 <sup>st</sup> bullet point - removal of ‘(e.g., via the internet).’ 5 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – addition of child criminal exploitation to the list and sexual harassment  5 <sup>th</sup> bullet point – added ‘records should include...’
Para 9 Children who are particularly vulnerable	Last two bullet points added – identifying persistent absence as a vulnerable factor and those children at risk of ‘honour’ based violence
Para 14 Child Sexual Exploitation & Child Criminal Exploitation	4 <sup>th</sup> sentence – addition of (who themselves may be victims of exploitation)  Third para – sentence added to explain that girls can have a very different experience of being criminally exploited than boys Fourth para added- to give more info on CSE
Para 19 Mental health	Footnote link added – ‘Mental health and behaviour in schools: guidance’
Para 24 Peer on peer (Child on child) incl sexual violence and sexual harassment	Title – changed to ‘Peer on Peer’ First sentence – ‘section’ changed to Part 5 in KCSiE 2021 Additional information added to give more examples of possible peer on peer abuse
Para 25	Second paragraph UKCIS new guidance added ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident’

Youth produced sexual imagery	Footnote 19 added – link to UKCIS guidance
Appendix 3	Additional info added about CCE and CSE Hyperlink added for – ‘Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners’ Hyperlink added for – ‘Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance’

### **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

Safeguarding Trustee: Carole Burgoyne

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nancy Hardwick

Status & Review Cycle: Statutory/Annual

Next Review Date: September 2022

#### Safeguarding Statement

Courtlands Special School recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students and expects all staff, governors, and volunteers to share this commitment. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice. We listen to our students and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern. When there are concerns for a child’s welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies. We will ensure concerns are discussed with parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that by doing so would be contrary to the child’s welfare. Child protection forms part of the school’s safeguarding responsibilities and we take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy underpins and guides our procedures and protocols to ensure its students and staff are safe.

### **Key Personnel**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*	Nancy Hardwick	Nancy.hardwick@transformingfutures.org.uk	Office: 01752 776848 Mobile: 07718 482580
Deputy DSL(s)*	Kirsty Thistlethwaite	Kirsty.thistlethwaite@transformingfutures.org.uk	Office: 01752 776848 Mobile: 07710 307441
Headteacher*/ **	Lee Earnshaw	Lee.earnshaw@transformingfutures.org.uk	Office: 01752 776848 Mobile: 07718 477706
Chair of Trustees*	Clive Grace	Clive.Grace@transformingfutures.org.uk	

\*Alternative out of hours contact details will be made available to staff

\*\*Holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies and LA safeguarding boards/hubs

## Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, adoptive parents, and LA corporate parents.

### 1. Introduction

#### Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Information Sharing 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015

### 2. Policy Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount.

- All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.
- We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff<sup>1</sup>, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe, and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.

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<sup>1</sup> Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc. and governors.

### 3. Policy Aims

- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and feel confident to, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to students, parents, and other partners.
- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors both in and outside of school or college; and abusers can be both adult/s to child/ren or child/ren to child/ren (peer on peer). All staff (but especially the DSL or deputy) will be considering the context within which such incidents and/ or behaviours occur familial or contextual.
- To ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and all staff will give full consideration to the use of appropriate assessments, resources and agency support when identifying the factors present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. (Familial or contextual.)
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other partnership agencies, especially the Police (health and CSC), and local authority safeguarding hubs, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU.
- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- To ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance)<sup>2</sup>, and a single central record is kept for audit.

### 4. Values

#### Supporting Children.

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems.
- We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education when experiencing difficulties, abuse and/or neglect.

Our school will support all children by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- promoting a caring, safe, and positive environment within the school.
- responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress and anxiety.
- offering details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support.
- liaising and working together with all other settings, support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- notifying Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU as soon as there is a significant concern.
- providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.
- children are taught to understand and manage risk through our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and through all aspects of school life. This includes online safety.

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<sup>2</sup> Guidance regarding DBS checks recently updated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012



- by accessing and utilising the necessary resources, guidance, and toolkits to support the identification of children requiring mental health support, support services and assessments and the subsequent systems and processes: and
- reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

#### Prevention / Protection

- We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends, and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- include regular consultation with children e.g., through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children to report whether they have had happy/sad lunchtimes/playtimes.
- ensure that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; in particular this will include anti-bullying work, information about peer on peer abuse (sexual harassment and sexual violence, consent), online-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training; provide focussed activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages e.g. more personal safety/independent travel; and
- ensure all staff, students and parent are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks have been shared.

#### 5. Safe School, Safe Staff

We will ensure that;

- all staff, governors and volunteers read KCSiE Part 1\* and Annex B annually and sign to say they read and understood it.
- all staff receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, the school's safeguarding statement, staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)<sup>3</sup>, child protection and safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, the role and names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy(ies), and sign to say they have read, understood, and will abide by it.
- all staff receive safeguarding and child protection information, including online safety, at induction.
- all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, in line with advice from Plymouth and Torbay Safeguarding Children's Partnership (PTSCP) which is regularly updated (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually.
- all members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns.
- all staff and governors have annual Level 2 child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is made available via the school website or other means and that parents/carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy via the Additional Information Leaflet which accompanies the School Admissions form along with the school website. All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and reference to it in the additional information leaflet.
- the school provides a coordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contributes to early help arrangements and inter-agency working and plans; assessments and plans are recorded on The Plymouth Portal.
- all staff will understand their role in the early help process.

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<sup>3</sup> The code of conduct includes acceptable use of technology, staff & student relationship boundaries and communications, including the use of social media.

- our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time, for example, by having evidence of DBS checks having been undertaken.
- community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, guidelines, and procedures.
- the name of the designated members of staff for child protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy(ies), are clearly advertised in the school with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse; and
- all Governors will be given a copy of Part 2 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and will sign to say they have read, understood, and will abide by the information contained.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

- All members of The Trustee Board understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely, to ensure that there is a Child Protection and Safeguarding policy together with a Staff Behaviour policy (Code of Conduct).
- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with PTSCP and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publicly available on the school website or by other means.
- Ensures that all staff including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and staff Code of Conduct.
- All staff have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) Part 1 and Annex B\* and that mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance.
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), supply staff, volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.
- A member of the Trustee Board is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Trustee Board who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that the role is explicit in the role holder's job description.
- On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by PTSCP or other provider every two years.
- All other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate; but at least annually.
- At least one member of the Trustee Board has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal social health and economic education (PSHE) and/or for maintained schools through relationship and sex education (RSE).
- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
- Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Enhanced DBS checks (without barred list checks unless the governor is also a volunteer at the school) are in place for all Governors.
- Any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy(ies) DSL(s) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- where there is a safeguarding concern that the child's wishes, and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

- systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback which operate with the best interest of the child at heart.
- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures.
- that students are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.
- they liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), before taking any action and on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer; and
- anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

#### The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- holds ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school and is a member of the SLT.
- acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole school community.
- will have the necessary knowledge and understanding to recognise possible children at risk of contextual and/or familial abuse or exploitation.
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- refreshes every two years their knowledge and skills to enable them to carry out the role and at regular intervals but at least annually accesses updates to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- will refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the local safeguarding hubs<sup>4</sup>, and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Enquiries<sup>5</sup> must be followed up in writing, if referred by telephone.
- will keep detailed, accurate records, either written or using appropriate online software, of all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- will ensure that all such records are kept confidential, stored securely and are separate from student records, until the child's 25th birthday.
- will ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional file is marked on the student records.
- will ensure that when a student leaves the school, relevant child protection information is passed to the new school (separately from the main student file) as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit and that confirmation of receipt is obtained.
- in addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL of the new school or college in advance of a child leaving; for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. All transfers should be made securely.
- will liaise with the Local Authority, its safeguarding partners<sup>6</sup> and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- has a working knowledge of PTSCP procedures.
- will ensure that either they, or another staff member, attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report where required which has been shared with the parents;
- will ensure that any student currently with a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their social worker;
- will ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood, and agree to work within the School's Child Protection policy, Behaviour policy, staff Code of Conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1\* and Annex B and ensure that the policies are used appropriately.

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<sup>4</sup> All new enquiries go to the local area hubs: DSL's can consult on Plymouth Gateway on 01752 668000, emergency out of hours referrals can be made to the Emergency Duty Team on 01752 305600; Devon MASH on 0345 1551071, emergency out of hours referrals can be made to the Emergency Duty Team on 0345 600 0388; Cornwall MARU on 03001231116 or emergency out of hours referrals can be made to the Emergency Duty Team on 01208251300; or the Police.

<sup>5</sup> Online forms are available via the local safeguarding partnerships

<sup>6</sup> NSPCC – when to call the police will support DSLs understand when they should consider contacting the police and what to expect when they do

- will organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training, and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all school staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences.
- will contribute to and provide, with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, the “Audit of Statutory Duties and Associated Responsibilities” (S175/157 audit) to be submitted annually to the Education Safeguarding Team working on behalf of Plymouth City Council.
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention and will support members of staff where Early Help and/or Plymouth Gateway (concerns around exploitation) is appropriate; and
- will ensure that the name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and deputies, are clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school’s role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

- is/ are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

All School Staff:

- understand that it is everyone’s responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.
- consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect both familial and contextual; and recognise that contextual harm can take a variety of different forms.
- know how to respond to a student who discloses abuse through delivery of ‘Working together to Safeguard Children’, and ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’.
- will refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary, where the child is at immediate risk to the police or and local authority safeguarding hubs, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU.
- will be aware of the Case Resolution protocol or the duty to report concerns if the DSL fails to do so without reasonable cause.
- are aware of the Early Help<sup>7</sup> process and understand their role within it including identifying emerging problems for children who may benefit from an offer of Early Help, liaising with the DSL in the first instance and supporting other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment through information sharing. In some cases, staff may act as the Lead Professional in Early Help cases.
- will provide a safe environment in which children can learn; and
- will be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.

## 7. Confidentiality

- Courtlands Special School recognises that in order to effectively meet a child’s needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018<sup>8</sup> is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child’s safety or wellbeing.
- However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to and local authority safeguarding hubs; Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU with their parents /carers unless to do

<sup>7</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to safeguard children](#)

<sup>8</sup> The UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) is supplementary to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (the GDPR) and replaces DPA 1998.

so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will contact the and local authority safeguarding hubs, Plymouth Gateway. Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU consultation line.

## 8. Child Protection Procedures

- Abuse and neglect are forms 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 the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- Abuse and Neglect may also take place outside of the home, contextual safeguarding, and this may include (but not limited to), sexual exploitation criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, radicalisation.
- Further information about the four categories of abuse; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in appendices 1 and 2.
- Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”.
- There are also a number of specific safeguarding concerns that we recognise our students may experience;
  - child missing from education
  - child missing from home or care
  - child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE)
  - bullying including cyberbullying
  - domestic abuse
  - drugs
  - fabricated or induced illness
  - faith abuse
  - female genital mutilation (FGM)
  - forced marriage
  - gangs and youth violence
  - gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
  - mental health
  - private fostering
  - radicalisation
  - youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)
  - teenage relationship abuse
  - trafficking
  - peer on peer abuse
  - upskirting
  - serious violence
  - sexual harassment

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse.

We also recognise that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

If staff are concerned about a child's welfare

- If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record these concerns via CPOMS or if not accessible a Concern Form available from reception and pass it to the DSL and safeguarding team. They may also discuss their concerns in person with the DSL, but the details of the concern should be recorded in writing.
- There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk but have no ‘real’ evidence. The student's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.

- Courtlands Special School recognises that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.
- In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the student if they are OK or if they can help in any way.
- Following an initial conversation with the student, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing. Records should include:
  - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
  - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
  - a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- If the student does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a student making a disclosure.

If a student discloses to a member of staff

- We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.
- A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on several subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the student staff will;

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and not overact or act shocked or disgusted – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the student and allow them time to talk.
- take what the child is disclosing seriously.
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions.
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations.
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about it when it started’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong; and
- tell the child what will happen next.

If a student talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible on CPOMS in the child’s own words. Staff should make this a matter of priority. Where there is a suspected non accidental injury, the DSL should be informed immediately.

### Notifying Parents

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

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from local authority safeguarding hubs, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU e.g., familial sexual abuse.

Where there are concerns about forced marriage or so-called honour-based abuse parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk. In some circumstances it would be appropriate to contact the police.

## Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to local authority children's social care; Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU or other support is appropriate in accordance with Plymouth Assessment Framework and Threshold Guidance <sup>9</sup>.
- If a referral is needed, then the DSL should make this rapidly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can and should consider making a referral themselves.
- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves.
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care; Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

## Supporting our Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

### 9. Children who are particularly vulnerable

Courtlands Special School recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children.

We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances.

In some cases, possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs, or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.

Some children may also find it harder to disclose abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

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

- is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health, and care plan).
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.

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<sup>9</sup> [PlymouthAssessmentFrameworkThreshold\\_0.pdf](#)

- has returned home to their family from care.
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- is a privately fostered child.
- has an imprisoned parent.
- is experiencing mental health, wellbeing difficulties.
- is persistently absent from education (including persistently absent for part of the school day).
- is at risk of 'honour' based abuse such as FGM or Forced Marriage

#### 10. Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying

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

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

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PHSE education.

#### 11. Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of racist incidents and report them to the Local Authority.

#### 12. Radicalisation and Extremism

The Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2015) under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Extremism is defined as 'as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised; adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal, or dangerous.

Courtlands Special School is clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follows the Department for Education guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism<sup>10</sup>.

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 Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

School staff receive training to help identify early signs of radicalisation and extremism. Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in detailed in Appendix 6.

Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable students to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education) in Schools (2014)<sup>11</sup>.

The school governors, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include the use of

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<sup>10</sup> [The Prevent duty](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Promoting Fundamental British Values](#)



school premises by external agencies, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community, and philosophy.

When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent then Devon & Cornwall Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

### 13. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse represents one quarter of all violent crime. It is actual or threatened physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual abuse. It involves the use of power and control by one person over another. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, and religion, mental or physical ability. Domestic abuse can also involve other types of abuse.

We use the term domestic abuse to reflect that a number of abusive and controlling behaviours are involved beyond violence.

Slapping, punching, kicking, bruising, rape, ridicule, constant criticism, threats, manipulation, sleep deprivation, social isolation, and other controlling behaviours all count as abuse.

Living in a home where domestic abuse takes place is harmful to children and can have a serious impact on their behaviour, wellbeing and understanding of healthy, positive relationships. Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of significant harm and staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of a child suffering or witnessing domestic abuse (See Appendix 5).

### 14. 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. This power imbalance could be due to age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and /or access to economic or other resources. The abuse could be linked to an exchange for something the victim perceives that they need or want and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increase status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and adults or children (who themselves may be experiencing exploitation). The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It may involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different from boys, the indicators may not be the same and both boys and girls that are being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.

More definitions and indicators are included in Appendix 3.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited should be passed without delay to the DSL. Courtlands Special School is aware there is a clear link between regular school absence/truancy, CSE and CCE. Staff should consider a child to be at potential CSE/CCE risk in the case of regular school absence/truancy and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents to assess this risk.

The DSL will use the Plymouth Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy<sup>12</sup> on all occasions when there is a concern that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited or where indicators have been observed that are consistent with a child who is being or who is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited. The Plymouth Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy will indicate to the DSL whether a CSE Referral

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<sup>12</sup> [PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION - \(plymouthscb.co.uk\)](http://plymouthscb.co.uk)

pathway is required. If the DSL is in any doubt, they will contact children's social care, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU for consultation.

In all cases if the assessment identified any level of concern the DSL should contact their local MASH and email the completed MASH referral form. If a child is in immediate danger the police should be called on 999.

Courtlands Special School is aware that a child often is not able to recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and does not see themselves as a victim. As a consequence, the child may resent what they perceive as interference by staff. However, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other type of abuse.

Courtlands Special School includes the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation in the PHSE and RSE curriculum. Students will be informed of the grooming process and how to protect themselves from people who may potentially be intent on causing harm. They will be supported in terms of recognising and assessing risk in relation to CSE/CCE, including online, and knowing how and where to get help.

#### 15. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police<sup>13</sup>.

The duty applies to all persons in Courtlands Special School who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead; however, the DSL should be informed.

If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101. The report should be made by the close of the next working day.

School staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators of FGM which are set out in Appendix 4. Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per our child protection reporting procedures. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female students about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

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

#### 16. Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse, and a serious abuse of human rights. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

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

School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with children's social care, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU.

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<sup>13</sup> [FGM procedural information](#)

## 17. Honour-based Abuse

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

Honour based abuse might be committed against people who;

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

It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

## 18. One Chance Rule

All staff are aware of the 'One Chance' Rule' in relation to forced marriage, FGM and HBV. Staff recognise they may only have one chance' to speak to a student who is a potential victim and have just one chance to save a life.

Courtlands Special School are aware that if the victim is not offered support following disclosure that the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBV cases.

## 19. Mental Health

Staff will 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. Whilst school recognise that only appropriately trained professionals can diagnose mental health problems; staff are able to make day to day observations of children and identify such behaviour that may suggest they are experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

How traumatic ACE's and experiences of abuse and neglect can impact on a child's mental health, behaviour, and education through to adolescence and adulthood will be covered in safeguarding awareness training and updates. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will share this with the DSL or deputy. We will also refer to the mental health and behaviour in schools guidance<sup>14</sup>

## 20. Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in residential schools, children's homes or hospitals are not considered to be privately fostered.

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

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

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. However, where a member of staff becomes aware that a student may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the DSL will notify children's social care, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU of the circumstances.

## 21. Looked after children and previously looked after children

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<sup>14</sup> [Mental health and behaviour in schools: guidance](#)

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and neglect. Courtlands Special School ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after/previously looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority virtual school head for children in care.

The designated teacher for looked after children works with the virtual school head to discuss how Student Premium Plus funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher will follow the statutory guidance 'Promoting the education of Looked After Children'.

## 22. Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence, and exclusions are closely monitored. The school will hold more than one emergency contact number for students and students where reasonably possible. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities'<sup>15</sup>.

Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

## 23. Online Safety

Our students increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social media sites such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and ooVoo.

Unfortunately, some adults and other children use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts or emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexual behaviour such as webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Students may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material such as pornographic websites or those which promote extremist behaviour, criminal activity, suicide or eating disorders.

Courtlands Special School has an online safety policy which explains how we try to keep students safe in school and how we respond to online safety incidents (See flowchart, Appendix 7). We also provide advice to parents when students are being asked to learn online at home and consider how best to safeguard both students and staff. Students are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum and all staff receive online safety training which is regularly updated. The school online safety co-ordinator is the DSL.

## 24. Peer on peer Abuse (Child on Child) incl Sexual violence and sexual harassment

The DSL, Trustee Board and Head Teacher will take due regard to Part 5, KCSiE 2021. In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by our behaviour policy. However, some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. Courtlands Special School recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. It will not be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The forms of peer-on-peer abuse are outlined below.

- domestic abuse – an incident or pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent against a current or former dating partner regardless of gender or sexuality.
- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- child sexual exploitation – children under the age of 18 may be sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by peers who are also under 18.
- harmful sexual behaviour – Children and young people presenting with sexual behaviours that are outside of developmentally 'normative' parameters and harmful to themselves and others (For more information, please see Appendix 2).

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<sup>15</sup> [CME Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities](#)

- upskirting – which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- serious youth violence<sup>16</sup> – Any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19’ i.e., murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm. ‘Youth violence’ is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offences. All staff will receive training so that they are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with serious violence and crime;
- 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); and
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos<sup>13</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).

The term peer-on-peer abuse can refer to all of these definitions and a child may experience one or multiple facets of abuse at any one time. Therefore, our response will cut across these definitions and capture the complex web of their experiences.

There are also different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse (i.e. girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subjected to initiation/hazing type violence).

Courtlands Special School aims to reduce the likelihood of peer on peer abuse through;

- the established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness;
- A robust relationships policy
- high expectations of behaviour.
- clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops students’ understanding of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour, consent and keeping themselves safe.
- systems for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, valued, and believed.
- robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for students identified as being a potential risk to other students and those identified as being at risk.

Research indicates that young people rarely disclose peer on peer abuse and that if they do, it is likely to be to their friends. Therefore, Courtlands Special School will also educate students in how to support their friends if they are concerned about them, that they should talk to a trusted adult in the school and what services they can contact for further advice.

Any concerns, disclosures, or allegations of peer-on-peer abuse in any form should be referred to the DSL using our child protection procedures as set out in this policy. Where a concern regarding peer-on-peer abuse has been disclosed to the DSL(s), advice and guidance will be sought from children’s social care; Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed the Police will be contacted.

Working with external agencies the school will respond to the unacceptable behaviour. If a student’s behaviour negatively impacts on the safety and welfare of other students, then safeguards will be put in place to promote the well-being of the students affected and the victim and perpetrator will be provided with support.

## 25. Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)<sup>17</sup>

The practice of children sharing images and videos via text message, email, social media, or mobile messaging apps has become commonplace. However, this online technology has also given children the opportunity to produce and distribute sexual imagery in the form of photos and videos. Such imagery involving anyone under the age of 18 is illegal.

Youth produced sexual imagery refers to both images and videos where;

<sup>16</sup> [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

<sup>17</sup> Youth refers to anyone under the age of 18



- 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.

All incidents of this nature should be treated as a safeguarding concern and in line with the UKCIS guidance 'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people'<sup>18</sup>, and 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident.'<sup>19</sup>

Cases where sexual imagery of people under 18 has been shared by adults and where sexual imagery of a person of any age has been shared by an adult to a child is child sexual abuse and should be responded to accordingly.

If a member of staff becomes aware of an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery, they should follow the child protection procedures and refer to the DSL as soon as possible. The member of staff should confiscate the device involved and set it to flight mode or, if this is not possible, turn it off. Staff should not view, copy, or print the youth produced sexual imagery.

The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff and subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate). Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm. At any point in the process if there is concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to MASH or the Police as appropriate.

Immediate referral at the initial review stage should be made to children's social care; Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU /Police if;

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is good reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special education needs).
- What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the child's development stage or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts.
- The imagery involves anyone aged 12 or under.
- There is reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example the child is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

If none of the above apply then the DSL will use their professional judgement to assess the risk to students involved and may decide, with input from the Headteacher, to respond to the incident without escalation to children's social care, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU or the police. Such decisions will be recorded.

In applying judgement, the DSL will consider if;

- there is a significant age difference between the sender/receiver.
- there is any coercion or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver.
- the imagery was shared and received with the knowledge of the child in the imagery.
- the child is more vulnerable than usual i.e., at risk.
- there is a significant impact on the children involved.
- the image is of a severe or extreme nature.
- the child involved understands consent.
- the situation is isolated or if the image been more widely distributed.
- there other circumstances relating to either the sender or recipient that may add cause for concern i.e., difficult home circumstances.
- the children have been involved in incidents relating to youth produced imagery before.

<sup>18</sup> [Sexting in schools and colleges](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident \(UCKIS\)](#)

If any of these circumstances are present the situation will be escalated according to our child protection procedures, including reporting to the police or children's social care, Plymouth Gateway, Devon MASH and Cornwall MARU. Otherwise, the situation will be managed within the school.

The DSL will record all incidents of youth produced sexual imagery, including both the actions taken, actions not taken, reasons for doing so and the resolution in line with safeguarding recording procedures.

## 26. Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction<sup>20</sup>.

We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff or staff may have concerns about another staff member. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher<sup>21</sup>. The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)<sup>22</sup> at the earliest opportunity and before taking any further action.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chief Executive Officer, who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying the Headteacher first. The school will follow the Trust and Plymouth procedures for managing allegations against staff, procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 and the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures.

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision. In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors following relevant HR and LADO advice as above.

We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context. Staff, parents, and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing including content placed on social media sites.

## 27. Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) Whistleblowing re the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Trustee Board whose contact details are readily available to staff (as pertinent to setting).

## 28. Physical Intervention

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. We recognise that touch is appropriate in the

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<sup>20</sup> Refer to "Guidance for Safe Working Practice"

<sup>21</sup> Chief Executive Officer in the event of an allegation against the Headteacher

<sup>22</sup> Plymouth LADO 01752306430 or email [lado@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:lado@plymouth.gov.uk);

context or working with children, and all staff have been given 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

Further information about our physical intervention practice can be found in our 'Positive Handling Policy on our school website.

## 29. Confidentiality, sharing information and GDPR

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

School and college staff should be proactive in sharing as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

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

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) emphasises that any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018<sup>23</sup> and HM Government Information Sharing and Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018

Information sharing is guided by the following principles:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

## 30. This policy also links to our policies on:

- Behaviour
- Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-bullying
- Health & Safety
- Allegations against staff
- Parental concerns
- Attendance
- Curriculum
- PSHE
- Teaching and Learning
- Administration of medicines
- Drug Education
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Physical intervention
- E-Safety, including staff use of mobile phones

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<sup>23</sup> The UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) is supplementary to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (the GDPR) and replaces DPA 1998.



- Risk Assessment
- Recruitment and Selection
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Intimate Care
- Radicalisation and Extremism
- Data Protection/GDPR Guidance

## Appendix 1

### Recognising signs of child abuse

#### Categories of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation)
- Neglect

#### Signs of Abuse in Children:

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-needing behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression and/or anxiousness
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Criminality
- Substance abuse
- Mental health problems
- Poor attendance

#### Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

#### Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

### Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence, or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g., belt marks, handprints, or a hairbrush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

### Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

### Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

### Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent, or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

### Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

### Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g., anxious, indiscriminate, or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

### Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g., for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia, or clothing

### Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g., adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic, and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

## Appendix 2

### Sexual Abuse & Sexual Harassment

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate, or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers, or children. Staff should be vigilant to:

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

#### Developmental Sexual Activity

Encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional, and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

#### Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour

Can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed. If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base. In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive, and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive, and assertive tendencies

Consent – agreement including all the following:

- Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
- Knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed
- Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
- Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
- Voluntary decision
- Mental competence

Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality, or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide supported by The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool or go to Southwest Child Protection Procedures ([www.proceduresonline.com](http://www.proceduresonline.com)) choose Child Protection Procedures, scroll down to Safeguarding Practice Guidance.

## Appendix 3

### Exploitation (including Child Sex Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines)

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual or criminal exploitation.

Signs include:

- going missing from home or school
- regular school absence/truancy
- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- online safety concerns such as youth produced sexual imagery or being coerced into sharing explicit images.
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

Child Criminal Exploitation can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in the exporting of illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line.'

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults being exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. The same grooming models used to coerce, intimidate, and abuse individuals for sexual and criminal exploitation are also used for grooming vulnerable individuals for county lines.

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

**For further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation:** [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

**For further information on County Lines:** [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#)

## Appendix 4

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms, and other indicators of FGM. If a member of staff, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, the member of staff must report this to the Police.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Section 5B of the 2003 Act<sup>1</sup> introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. The duty came into force on 31 October 2015.

What is FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 types of procedure:

Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris

Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora

Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia

Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising, and scraping the genital area.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

Is FGM legal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK.

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening are:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad

- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia, and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Disclosure

The 'One Chance' rule

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges take action **without delay** and make a referral to children's services.



## Appendix 5

### Domestic Abuse (incl Operation Encompass)

How does it affect children?

Children can be traumatised by seeing and hearing violence and abuse. They may also be directly targeted by the abuser or take on a protective role and get caught in the middle. In the long term this can lead to serious long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, children may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

What are the signs to look out for?

Children affected by domestic abuse reflect their distress in a variety of ways. They may change their usual behaviour and become withdrawn, tired, start to wet the bed, and have behavioural difficulties. They may not want to leave their house or may become reluctant to return. Others will excel, using their time in your care as a way to escape from their home life. None of these signs are exclusive to domestic abuse so when you are considering changes in behaviours and concerns about a child, think about whether domestic abuse may be a factor.

What should I do if I suspect a family is affected by domestic abuse?

**If you are concerned about a child, young person or adult** in Plymouth please contact the Plymouth Gateway on **01752 668000**.

**If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult**, please contact the Plymouth Gateway on 01752 668000

**PDAS-Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service** is a charity delivering support services to women and young people experiencing the trauma of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Telephone 0800 4582558

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline** Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, available 24hour a day 0808 2000 247 and its website offers guidance and support for potential victims.

**Refuge:** <https://www.refuge.org.uk/>

Operation Encompass helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help for children. Police will inform the 'key adult' within school if they have been called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household before registration the next day.

## Appendix 6

### INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

*Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.*

3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:  
The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:
  - Encourage, justify, or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs.
  - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts.
  - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
  - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal, and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the student / student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Crisis – the student / student may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / student’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the student / student may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration.
- Special Educational Need – students / students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour.
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

The Prevent duty ensures schools and colleges have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Channel is the voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to individuals that have been identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation. Prevent referrals may be passed to the multi-agency Channel panel to determine whether individuals require support.

[The Prevent Duty can be accessed via this link.](#) (School specific para's 57-76)

[Summary of The Prevent Duty for Schools and Childcare Providers \(June 2015\)](#)

[The Prevent Duty, for Further Education Institutions](#)

Guidance on Channel <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Further information can be obtained from the Home Office website.

## **Appendix 7 What do to if you have an online safety concern.**

- Use usual reporting procedures via CPOMS
- Further guidance and information can be accessed via the SWGfL

## **Appendix 8**

Further advice on child protection is available from:

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx>

Anti-Bullying Alliance: <http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Beat Bullying: <http://www.beatbullying.org/>

Childnet International –making the internet a great and safe place for children. Includes resources for professionals and parents <http://www.childnet.com/>

Thinkuknow (includes resources for professionals and parents) <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Safer Internet Centre <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

Transgender <http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

[Schools transgender toolkit](#)

[Intercom trust transgender guidance](#)

Appendix 9

**For Early Help, Consultation and Enquiries please  
contact:**

Telephone: **01752 668000**

Email: [gateway@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:gateway@plymouth.gov.uk)

Enquiry and referral form available at:

[www.plymouthscb.co.uk/making-a-referral](http://www.plymouthscb.co.uk/making-a-referral)

**Emergency Duty Team** out of hours 01752 305600

**Police** non-emergency 101

For all **LADO** enquiries (01752) 306 430

[www.lado@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:www.lado@plymouth.gov.uk)

**Early Help Advice and Support  
contact:**

Telephone: **01752 668000**

Email: [gateway@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:gateway@plymouth.gov.uk)



**Safeguarding  
&  
Child Protection  
Protocols  
2021**

## **Courtlands Special School: Safeguarding Statement**

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the health, safety, and welfare of all our students and expect all staff, volunteers, and visitors to share this commitment. Under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 we have the responsibility to safeguard and promote our students' welfare; this responsibility complements Section 175 of the Education Act 2002. We listen to our students and take seriously what they tell us.

### **The Safeguarding of the children in our care is our first priority.**

*“Safeguarding The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Systems for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns are rigorous. Staff receive regular updates on safeguarding in line with current legislation. They know what to do if they have any anxieties or doubts to minimise risk to pupils and keep them safe. Leaders have a strong focus on ensuring that pupils' good emotional and mental health is a high priority in their work to safeguard pupils.”*

Ofsted Inspection January 2020

Our school has a duty to make sure that all children feel safe and protected.



Mrs Hardwick and Miss Thistlethwaite are responsible for child protection.

Our link Trustee is Carole Burgoyne.

## **What to do if you have a safeguarding concern**

- A non-serious concern should be logged on CPOMS using the guide to meet expectations.
- Any serious or urgent concerns should be reported to DSL or DDSL as they happen. This is especially so if it is after lunchtime.
- Any allegations or concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the Head Teacher

Lee Earnshaw. If the concern is about Mr Earnshaw, then report to Gavin Gracie, our CEO. CPOMS should not be used for this purpose.

- Our safeguarding and whistleblowing policies should be referred to for further information.
- Use the NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline if you feel you can't raise your concern internally, or if your concern isn't addressed: 0800 028 0285 | [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- CPOMS is used for recording all safeguarding concerns, serious or minor.
- Use the CPOMS guide and induction training on the expectations for CPOMS logs.
- Kirsty Thistlethwaite is our EHAT lead so will support you with any child / family needing early help support.

### **Important Contact Numbers:**

- The Plymouth Gateway: 01752 668000
- Devon MASH: 0345 155 1071
- Cornwall MARU: 030012301116

ANYONE can call these numbers to log serious concerns or seek advice.

**Here are some of the ways we are working hard to build a safe community for all who belong here.**

### **Safeguarding of Children**

- Safeguarding is managed by a team of two staff with the Head teacher, Deputy head teacher and Curriculum Lead in support.
- Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at weekly Senior Leadership Team meeting.
- All staff are effective users of our Child Protection Online Monitoring Service.
- All staff receive safeguarding training three times a year in person and three times a year via a Staff Newsletter.
- Further online safeguarding training is available for all staff through the National College.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is also the Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children and a trained trauma informed and mental health practitioner.
- Six staff members are trained as mental health first aiders.
- We offer effective early help family support through our Pastoral Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding lead meets monthly with the safeguarding Trustee and reports to the Safeguarding and Wellbeing committee.
- Comprehensive use of the Child Protection Online Management Service -CPOMS



## Wider Safeguarding Culture at Courtlands

- There are stringent vetting procedures for all staff and volunteers.
- There is robust onsite security understood and applied by all staff.
- Leaders rigorously manage attendance and absence and maintain strong links with our Education Welfare Officer.
- Our Wellbeing Curriculum includes explicit teaching about safe risk, managing dangers in the home and community, road safety awareness and explores specific mental health conditions.
- Every pupil is assessed using the Motional wellbeing tool. This helps us to build support where clear links between pupil wellbeing and any plateaus in academic progress can be seen in our data.
- Pupils have a Safeguarding focus day once per term with themes including NSPCC PANTS campaign, online safety, consent
- A safeguarding newsletter is issued for staff 3 times a year to ensure up to date information about safeguarding themes, for example of FGM, CSE, Peer on Peer Abuse, Early Help tools and Online safety issues.
- Trauma informed practice is viewed as a school priority including a relationships policy and behaviour regulation policy with focus on the safety and protection of pupils at its heart. Our CAMHS worker and educational psychologist supported this process.
- Our school communication lead contributes to the development of communication tools to make policies inclusive for all.
- We use the Seesaw online home school communication tool for immediate communication with parents during the day.
- Courtlands invests in strategies to help us achieve a national wellbeing award with the safeguarding of children and wellbeing of staff at its heart.
- All staff are trained annually in Safety Intervention and de-escalation strategies to ensure safe physical interventions when they are necessary as a last resort. This is in addition to termly de-escalation training.
- All staff receive high quality induction with safeguarding themes and procedures included.
- Individual pupil risk assessments include emotional support plans for pupils who need them so that all staff can ensure that children have a consistent experience at Courtlands.
- Pupil individual risk assessments are updated regularly as working documents.
- Parent support is available through regular items on the parent newsletter using resources from National Online Safety.

## **Fire Evacuation Procedure**

- Maps of the school are placed around the school, in each classroom, corridors and in reception for your information.
- If you hear the fire alarm bell: Evacuate the building by the most direct outside door and assemble on the playground at the rear of the school.
- If you are responsible for a child, lead them quickly, and quietly to the playground assembly point.
- If you are unsure about the location of a child, please report this to a member of staff immediately, ideally the class teacher.
- Class teachers will check their registers for any missing children.
- The reception team will check the visitors log for any missing adults.
- A senior member of staff will allow re-entry to the building once they declare that it is safe to do so.
- If you discover a fire, the alarm should be sounded immediately. There are 'break glass' fire alarm boxes around the school.
- Do not try to fight the fire.

## **Visitors**

- All visitors must sign in and out of the school at the reception desk. You will be required to wear a visitor badge/sticker which you must wear until you leave.
- All staff and visitors have a responsibility for safeguarding our pupils.

*To ensure this:*

- We ask that your mobile phones are switched off and handed into reception whilst you are on the premises.
- In the event that you need to use your phone, then please do so outside of the main entrance doors.
- Do not take pictures, videos, or sound recordings unless you have sought prior permission from the Head Teacher.
- Please ensure that you do not use inappropriate language in schools, and you do not talk about confidential issues within hearing of others (adults or children).
- If you are working one to one with a child, please ensure that staff know where you are working and how long this will be.
- When working with a child, please do so in an open space if possible. Otherwise, keep the door open or ensure you are visible through the window.
- If a child says something to you that you think could be a safeguarding matter, try to listen to the child and not ask leading questions. Do not promise that it will remain confidential between the two of you and if possible, write down what was said immediately, afterwards.
- If you have a concern about a child, or another adult in the school, please speak to one of the safeguarding team.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

- Proof of ID will be requested
- Do not use profane or inappropriate language
- Dress appropriately
- Keep staff informed of where you are and what you are doing
- Never give your personal contact details to children or young people. Contact via social media is strictly prohibited

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Toilets – These are available next to the reception desk.
  - Parking – We can offer limited parking for our visitors
  - Minibus/Taxi spaces are designated spaces and must not be used to park in between the hours of 8.45-9.15 and 2.45-3.15
  - The gates are closed, and no traffic is permitted on site between 8.45-9.15 and 2.45-3.15 except for official school transport
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- If you want to know more about our procedures or policies, please speak to the Headteacher or any of the following team members:
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***Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nancy Hardwick -Senior Leader***



***Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Kirsty Thistlethwaite, Pastoral Manager***



