



# Oswald Road Primary School

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Approved by Full Governing Body: August 22  
Re-approved by Full Governing Body: Sept 22  
Reviewed annually to review updates: September 2023

Headteacher: Deborah Howard  
Chair of Governors: Peter Martin



Oswald Road Primary School		
The Headteacher who has the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding is Deborah Howard		
In their absence, the authorised member of staff are Donna Wealleans and Helen Woolf		
<b>KEY SCHOOL STAFF &amp; ROLES</b>		
Name	Role	Location and/or Contact Phone Number
Donna Wealleans	Deputy Headteacher, Designated Person for LAC Children and DSL	0161 881 4266 School based
Helen Woolf	Deputy Headteacher, SENCO and DSL	School based
Amanda Clifton	Health Lead and DSL	0161 881 4266
Kieran Bentley	Sports Coach and DSL	School based
<b>NAMED GOVERNOR for Safeguarding &amp; Prevent</b>	Contact Phone Number/Email	
Yogita Patel	<u><a href="mailto:yp.governors@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk">yp.governors@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk</a></u>	

Our procedure if there is a concern about child welfare or safeguarding is:-

**To report any concerns to one of our Designated People outlined above.**

**What should I do if a child discloses information?**

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief; accept what is being said.
  - Allow the child to talk freely and reassure them, but do not make promises that might not be possible to keep.
  - Do not promise confidentially but explain that you have to tell the Designated Person so that they can help him/her.
  - Do not interrogate the child or ask leading questions. Reassure them that it is not their fault. – Stress that it was the right thing to tell and listen carefully rather than ask direct questions. **Immediately record the details of the disclosure, including exact words and pass it to a Designated Person.**
- Early Help Hubs: North 0161 234 1973, Central 0161 234 1975, South 0161 234 1977
  - Social Care Advice & Guidance Service: 0161 234 5001
  - Complex Safeguarding Hub Advice Line: 0161 226 4196
  - MCC Safeguarding in Education Team: 0161 245 7171

It is important that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be poor or unsafe practice by colleagues. Reporting concerns expressed by children and staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child can undoubtedly place the member of staff in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. All concerns of poor practice, concerns raised by a child or parent or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported.

Our procedure is that any concerns of this nature are reported directly to the Headteacher, In her absence, it is to be reported to one of the two Deputy Headteachers.

(full information in section 9)

If the allegation is about the Headteacher you should report to the Chair of Governors Peter Martin [pm.governor@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:pm.governor@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk)

- Manchester LADO (sometimes known as DOLA or LA Designated Officer): 0161 234 1214

Our procedure for whistleblowing if there is an urgent concern about child welfare or safeguarding that cannot be dealt with through our usual systems is:-

The School hopes that in many cases, employees will be able to raise any concerns with their line manager. Together, they may be able to agree a way of resolving a concern quickly and effectively. However, where the matter is more serious, or an employee feels that their Line Manager has not addressed the concern properly or their line manager is not the most appropriate person then employees should raise the concern directly with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If the concern relates to the Headteacher the matter should be raised with the Chair of Governors. In the event both the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors are the subject of the concern, the complaint must be made in writing to the HR Director, One Education.

- NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285

**This policy will be reviewed at annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review**

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## **1.INTRODUCTION**

Through this policy we aim to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all children and adults feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously.

This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults in our school, including regular staff, supply staff, volunteers and visitors, are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to identify and address any safeguarding concerns and to ensure consistent good practice.

Our approach is child-centred.

**'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.'** (KCSIE, Part 1, p 5)

See KCSIE Part 1, Part 5 & Annex B for definitions and further information about:-

- Abuse & Neglect - including physical, emotional & sexual abuse and neglect (1.21-30)
- Channel (Annex B, p148)
- Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents (Annex B, p140)
- Child on Child Abuse – including sexual harassment, upskirting & sharing of nude and semi-nude images (1.32-35, Part 5)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (1.36-39, Annex B, p140-142)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (1.36, 40-42, Annex B, p140-142)
- Children and the Court System (Annex B, p142)
- Children Missing from Education (Annex B, p142-3)
- Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) (2.202-4)
- Children with Family Members in Prison (Annex B, p143)
- County Lines (Annex B, p141-2)

- Cybercrime (Annex B, p143-4)
- Domestic Abuse (New para at 1.43 and Annex B, p144-5)
- Early Help (1.20, 1.58,)
- Elective Home Education (2.175-8)
- Homelessness (Annex B p145-6)
- Human Rights Act, Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty (clarification 1.86-1.93)
- Looked After Children and children open to or who have been open to a Social Worker (Further information on the role of the Head of the Virtual School, 1.191-196)
- LGBT children (Extended information at 2. 202-204)
- Mental Health (1.45-7, Annex B p146)
- Modern Slavery & the National Referral Mechanism (Annex B, p146-7)
- Online Safety, including Education at Home (2.134-147, Annex B, p155-7)
- Prevent Duty (Annex B, p148, Additional support, p149)
- Preventing Radicalisation (Annex B, p147-8)
- Serious Violence (1.48, Annex B p150-151)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (Part Five, Annex B, p149-50)
- So-called 'Honour-Based Abuse' including Female Genital Mutilation & Forced Marriage & Breast Ironing (1.44 & Annex B, p151-3)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. The aims of this policy are in accordance with both our School visions and values and our Equal Opportunities Policy and it is an integral part of all of our activities and functions.

**'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined ... as:-**

- **protecting children from maltreatment;**
  - **preventing impairment of children's mental 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.'**
- (KCSIE, p 6)**

- 1.1 Under the Education Act 2002, schools/settings/colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and are committed to the guidance set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022' Our policy ensures that we comply with our Statutory Duties (Appendices A & B)

- 1.2 Our policy takes account of non-statutory guidance issued by the DfE and other relevant organisations (Appendix C) in addition to guidance issued by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority), the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) and Manchester Local Authority, especially Education, Children's Services and Community Safety (MCC)
- 1.3 Our policy ensures that we work in partnership with other organisations, where appropriate, to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them and that we comply with local policies, procedures and arrangements (Appendix E)
- 1.4 Our policy complements and supports other relevant school policies (Appendix D).
- 1.5 Our policy is regularly reviewed and we are responsive to new guidance and legislation and to promoting the safety of our staff and pupils in crisis situations.

## **2. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT**

#### **2.1 OUR GOVERNING BODY**

**Our Governing Body have a strategic leadership responsibility for our school's safeguarding arrangements and will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will have regard to KCSiE 2022, ensuring policies, procedures and training in their schools are effective and comply with the law at all times.**

**Our Governing Body are fully aware of our role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, of Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) arrangements and of the Child Death Review partnership arrangements and will ensure that we work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.**

**The Governing Body will ensure that:-**

- **All members of the Governing Body have read the most recent publication of Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety**

- All members of the Governing Body have received appropriate training to enable them to provide strategic challenge and assure themselves that there is a robust whole school approach to safeguarding (KCSiE Part 2.81)
- A named member is identified as the designated governor for Safeguarding. This is Yogita Patel.
- Governors facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding and that all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at heart.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, they and school leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- The systems in place are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Policies and procedures allow for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- The school has an effective Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The school has a Behaviour Policy which includes measures to prevent bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Child protection files are maintained as required using CPOMS
- More than one emergency number is held on file for each pupil/student
- The identified governor will provide the governing body with appropriate information about safeguarding and will liaise with the designated member of staff.
- Our safeguarding policy and our staff Code of Conduct are reviewed at least annually and staff are given opportunities to contribute to and shape our safeguarding arrangements and policies. Addenda or appendices may be added during periods of crisis to reflect changes of circumstance.
- We operate safer recruitment and selection practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff, volunteers and contractors including overseas checks where relevant. This is overseen by our Headteacher and Business Manager.
- We have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors and these are in line with KCSiE and Local Authority procedures. We will work with the LADO and other relevant agencies to support any investigations.
- All staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children and young people and contractors who are in contact with children and young people receive appropriate training and information about the



safeguarding processes.

- There is appropriate challenge and quality assurance of the safeguarding policies and procedures. Describe arrangements
- Our governors regularly review the effectiveness of online safety arrangements, including filters and monitoring, preparation for any online challenges or hoaxes and information shared with parents.

## **2.2 OUR HEADTEACHER**

**Our Headteacher will ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body or proprietor particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are understood and followed by all staff.**

**Our Headteacher is fully aware of our role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, of Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) arrangements and of the Child Death Review partnership arrangements. We will ensure that we work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, identifying and responding to their needs.**

**'Schools and colleges should work with local authority children's social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans'. (KCSiE 2.112)**

**'All schools and colleges should allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.'**  
**(KCSiE, 2.113)**

**Our Headteacher is fully aware of statutory guidance in KCSiE and will ensure that:-**

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are fully implemented and followed by all staff, including supply teachers and volunteers and that they are regularly updated in response to local practice or national changes in legislation.

- All staff including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors understand and comply with our Code of Conduct.
- We evaluate our safeguarding policies & procedures at least on an annual basis and return our completed Safeguarding Self Evaluation (SEF) using the S175 online tool to the LA as requested.
- We share the Safeguarding Self Evaluation and Action Plan with governors at least annually.
- We work with the LA to ensure that our policies and procedures are in line with DFE and LA guidance.
- A senior member of staff, known as the DSL, is appointed with a clear job description. He/she has lead responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding and receives appropriate on-going training, supervision and support as well as sufficient time and resources to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.
- Parents/carers are aware of and have an understanding of our responsibilities to promote the safety and welfare of our pupils by making our statutory obligations clear in our prospectus.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on our website and is included in the staff handbook and volunteers' handbook.
- Child friendly information of how to raise a concern/make a disclosure has been developed through our Pastoral and Quality First Teaching arrangements and is accessible to all children.
- We co-operate fully with MCC and MSP multi-agency safeguarding procedures and arrangements are in place to monitor the quality of referrals and interventions and the processes for escalation of concerns, including for out of hours & school holidays
- We create a culture whereby all staff, volunteers and visitors feel confident and have knowledge of how to raise a concern about poor or unsafe practice in regard to the safeguarding and welfare of the children and young people and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively. **Information is provided on our Inventory system.**
- We have systems in place to ensure that any staff who are carrying out both regulated activities and other roles commissioned from external agencies/ organisations have been DBS checked. and their employing organisations have safeguarding policies in place, including safer recruitment and annual safeguarding training appropriate to roles and we are compliant with legislation relevant to our setting. Amanda Clifton leads our training and Safeguarding Training Matrix.
- We ensure a risk assessment takes place to establish that the appropriate checks take place on volunteers.
- We have appropriate procedures to ensure that there is no risk to children from visitors and we exercise diligence and prevent any organisation or speaker from using our facilities to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils and staff. Visitors are approved by

our Headteacher.

- There are suitable arrangements for visitors coming onto the premises which may include an assessment of the educational value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required.

### **2.3 OUR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)**

The DSL is a member of our Senior Leadership Team and has a specific responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. He/she takes lead responsibility for Early Help, safeguarding and child protection, although some activities may be delegated as appropriate.

The DSL, together with the team will:

- Act as the first point of contact with regards to all safeguarding matters.
  - Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feeling, and also understand the difficulties some children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances
- Work closely with the school's lead for mental health
- Help promote educational outcomes by working closely with their teachers and sharing information about their welfare, safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Attend specialist DSL training every two years.
- Keep up to date with changes in local policy and procedures and be aware of any guidance issued by the DfE, MSP and LA concerning Safeguarding, eg through DSL Networks, Safeguarding Newsletters and Circular Letters
- Provide/commission support and training for staff and volunteers this area is led by Amanda Clifton.
- Liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- Ensure that all referrals made to Children's Services are effective and in line with MSP procedures, and follow escalation process if necessary. They are monitored by the Headteacher and Deputy DSL.
  - Understand the assessment process for providing early help
  - Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively using the Signs of Safety approach to report writing and conference components.

- Ensure that all staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children, including the named DSL, receive the appropriate funding, training, resources and support needed to undertake this role. Access to professional supervision is recommended practice and the team have access to this half termly
  - Know when to call the police if a crime may have been committed following the National Police Chiefs' Guidance (Part 5.465)
  - Be aware of the requirement for children investigated by the police to be supported by an appropriate adult and have arrangements in place for ensuring this if a police officer requests to meet with a child when in school this is facilitated by a DSL where possible. (Annex C, link to statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019)
  - ● Refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk/harm to a child
- Ensure that referrals to the police are timely and appropriate, following the National Police Chiefs' Guidance
  - Create and maintain child protection files and keep them up to date.
  - Keep information confidential and store securely with a separate file for each child using CPOMS.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and are aware of our reporting and recording procedures and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child.
  - Help promote educational outcomes for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker, in conjunction with other appropriate colleagues (KCSiE, 191-196)
  - Share and transfer safeguarding and child protection information as appropriate.
- Always be available during school/college/setting hours during termtime, and at other times as designated by the Headteacher. One of the DSL is always contactable throughout the school year.
  - Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
  - Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on children and young people
  - Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents/carers are made aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school/college in this.

## **2.4 ALL STAFF**

All staff in the school, including supply staff and volunteers have responsibility for safeguarding, according to their roles and under the guidance of the DSL.

All staff will:-

- Follow our agreed Code of Conduct and 'Safer Working Practices' guidance
- Read Part One/Annex A/Annex B of KCSiE 2022 as directed by senior leaders and appropriate to individual roles.
- Attend training sessions/briefings as required to ensure that they are aware of the signs of Abuse, Neglect, Complex Safeguarding Concerns and key LA approaches including Early Help, Signs of Safety and Safe & Together
- Attend training sessions/briefings as required to ensure that they follow relevant policies eg Behaviour Management Policy/Positive Handling Policy
- Provide a safe environment where children can learn
- Be aware of specific vulnerabilities of some children, including those with poor attendance and those with a Social Worker.
- Be approachable to children and respond appropriately to any disclosures
- Understand the concept of 'it could happen here' in respect of child sexual violence or sexual harassment and be proactive in response to a whole school approach to the issue
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not ultimately be in the best interest of the child
- Know what to do if they have a concern and follow our agreed procedures for recording concerns, sharing information and making referrals
- Attend multi-agency meetings as required, if appropriate to their role
- Contribute to the teaching of safeguarding in the curriculum as required, if appropriate to their role
- Provide targeted support for individual and groups of children as required, if appropriate to their role

Teaching staff have additional statutory duties, including to report any cases of known or suspected Female Genital Mutilation.

### **3. TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING**

- 3.1 In accordance with KCSiE, all new staff and regular volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding information during induction and be made aware of the systems within the school which support safeguarding eg, the Behaviour Policy
- 3.2 All staff must ensure that they have read and understood KCSiE: Part One/Annex A and Annex B . This should be done during Induction. All staff are expected to refresh their knowledge as and when required.

- 3.3 All staff will receive regular child protection training at least every 2 years which includes basic safeguarding information about our policies and procedures, signs and symptoms of abuse (emotional and physical), indicators of vulnerability to exploitation and radicalisation, how to manage a disclosure from a child as well as when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child, with regular updates in relation to local and national changes. DSL's provide training to staff during INSET and throughout the year. The impact is monitored through CPOMS and the referrals.
- 3.4 All staff need to understand the impact mental health problems may have on all aspects of safeguarding including the relevance of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the impact trauma on children and young people and this is included in our training programme.
- 3.5 All staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and updates, including online safety as required, providing them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The information is disseminated to staff on a regular basis via the staff newsletter.
- 3.6 To recognise the expertise built within staff by training and managing concerns on a daily basis. Staff will be provided with the opportunity to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy.
- 3.7 All interview panels will include at least 1 member that has completed up to date Safer Recruitment training within the last 3 years.

## **4. SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 PUPIL VOICE**

Children are encouraged to contribute to the development of policies and share their views. This is collated in various forms and for a variety of different reasons. Working parties are also formulated when new policies are being formed and implemented. Rights Respecting Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child) and Article 13 (Freedom of expression). We participate in the UNICEF Rights Respecting School programme and are accredited at Gold Level.

### **4.2 POOR ATTENDANCE**

- 4.2.1 We view poor attendance as a safeguarding issue and in accordance with our Attendance Policy, absences are rigorously pursued and

recorded. This includes missing individual lessons, as well as being absent or late at Registration. Any concerning patterns are reviewed in partnership with

the appropriate agencies, we take action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences in order to safeguard the welfare of children in our care.

- 4.2.2 Our Attendance Policy identifies how individual cases are managed and how we work proactively with parents/carers to ensure that they understand why attendance is important. In certain cases this may form part of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) or a Parenting Contract.
- 4.2.3 We implement the statutory and LA requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children missing education (CME), part-time timetables and off-rolling and understand how important this practice is in safeguarding children and young people. Please refer to the Attendance Policy.
- 4.2.4 We will follow the Anxiety Based School Avoidance guidance (MCC, updated version May 2021) to assist with strategies for supporting children and young people experiencing anxiety to return to school.
- 4.2.5 We will alert the relevant team or authority if a new child who has been expected to attend, does not arrive on the due date. (MCC)

### **4.3 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION (AP)**

- 4.3.1 We will only place children in AP which is a registered provider and has been quality assured. MCC advise that schools should only use

AP

that has been judged by Ofsted to be Good or better.

- 4.3.2. Children who require access to AP will have a personalised learning plan designed to meet their needs. Their attendance will be monitored by us in accordance with the School Register Regulations (secondary schools only). Our DSL will work together with the DSL at the AP to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are followed up appropriately.

### **4.4 EXCLUSIONS**

- 4.4.1. We comply with statutory regulations and with the LA Inclusion Policy (October 2021).
- 4.4.2. The DSL will be involved when a fixed term or permanent exclusion is being discussed and any safeguarding issues will be considered. If there is an open EH, CiN or CP, the EH Practitioner or Social Worker

will be informed.

4.4.3 We will work with the MCC Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges guidance (Appendix C) to assist in decision making around exclusion and other responses to carrying or using weapons in school.

4.4.4 Where it is felt that a child or young person is likely to be permanently excluded a multi-agency assessment will be instigated to ensure that there is improved understanding of the needs of the young person and their family and that the key agencies are involved

## **4.5 VULNERABLE GROUPS**

4.5.1 We ensure that all key staff work together to safeguard vulnerable children. Information from CPOMS is monitored closely by all teams within school.

4.5.2 Any child may benefit from early help at times, but all staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Has or has had a social worker
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'- based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day
- Is an international new arrival, refugee or asylum seekers
- Is looked after, previously looked after or under a special guardianship order.



- LGBT children (KCSiE, Part 2:202-204)

4.5.3. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. All staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:-

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- The potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers (KCSiE, Part 2, 198)

4.5.3 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. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. (KCSiE, Part 2:179)

4.5.4. We ensure that staff consider the context in which incidents occur and whether and wider environmental factors (extra-familial harm) are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

4.5.5. We ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status and regarding a child who was previously looked after and we work with relevant social workers and the Virtual School.

#### 4.6 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

4.6.1 We understand the variety of reasons why some parents/carers would wish to home educate their child/ren and support this where the child's best education is at the heart of the decision.

4.6.2 We also understand that by being educated at home, some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs

4.6.3 If a parent/carer informs us of their intention to remove their child/ren from school, we will aim to co-ordinate a meeting between ourselves, parents/carers (and other key professionals if relevant) to ensure that the best interests of the child have been considered, especially

if the child has SEND, is vulnerable or has a social worker, before the final decision is made.

4.6.4 We will inform Manchester LA of all deletions from the admission register when a child is taken off-role and we understand that a child may be removed from roll as soon as the parent has informed us of their decision.

4.6.5 We are familiar with the guidance from DfE outlining the roles and responsibilities of the LA in relation to Elective Home Education

#### 4.7 COMMUNITY SAFETY

##### 4.7.1 Serious violence

We are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime

##### 4.7.2 Child abduction and community safety incidents

We will support children by building on their confidence and ability to deal with challenging situations to enable them to keep themselves safe.

4.7.3 Our response to children carrying knives or other weapons in school and in situations out of school is aligned to the Manchester Knife and Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges Guidance (Knife Crime Protocol) in which we take a holistic and measured approach on a case by case basis to such incidents in and out of school. (See Appendix C)

## **5 . CASE MANAGEMENT, RECORD KEEPING & MULTI-AGENCY WORKING**

### **5.1 KEEPING RECORDS**

At Oswald Road Primary we use a software application called CPOMS for monitoring child protection, safeguarding and a whole range of pastoral and welfare issues. This system works alongside the school's existing safeguarding processes and helps to monitor the management of child protection, behavioural issues, bullying, special educational needs, domestic issues and much more. By using CPOMS effectively, we can ensure that children are safe and fully supported.

5.1.1 We keep and maintain up to date information on children on the school roll including where and with whom the child is living, attainment, attendance, referrals to and support from other agencies. The record will also include a chronology of any other significant event in a child's life and up to date contact details for adults who have day to day care of the child.

5.1.2 We keep copies of all referrals to Children and Families Services, the Early Help Hub and any other agencies related to safeguarding children.

5.1.3 We keep our safeguarding records secure.

5.1.4 We send a pupil's child protection or safeguarding report from CPOMS to a new establishment if they leave as soon as we are informed of the new school. We keep a copy of the file in accordance with our Records Policy (See Appendix E) and statutory and LA Guidance (See Appendices A, B & D).

## **5.2 RECORDING AND REPORTING CONCERNS**

5.2.1 All staff, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child and all such concerns must be taken seriously (Appendix A). If a concern arises all staff, volunteers and visitors must:

- Speak to the DSL or the person who acts in their absence
- Agree with this person what action should be taken, by whom and when it will be reviewed
- Record the concern using our safeguarding recording system

## **5.3 WORKING WITH PARENTS/CARERS**

5.3.1 Our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the children in our care. We aim to do this in partnership with our parents/carers and would expect them to provide up-to-date contact details, including at least 2 emergency contacts.

5.3.2 In most cases parents/carers will be informed when concerns are raised about the safety and welfare of their child and given the opportunity to address any concerns raised.

5.3.3 We aim to engage with parents/carers through the LA Early Help processes, including holding strength-based conversations.

5.3.4 We will inform, and gain consent from parents/carers if possible, if a referral is to be made to Children's Social Care or any other agency **unless it is believed that by doing so would put the child at**

**risk** eg in cases of suspected sexual abuse. We will record the reasons if consent is not gained.

5.3.5 In such cases the DSL or Headteacher will seek advice from Children's Social Care AGS.

## **5.4 MULTI-AGENCY WORKING**

5.4.1 We will develop effective links with other relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquiries regarding child protection issues.

5.4.2 We will develop effective links with the Early Help Hubs and carry out an Early Help Assessments (EHA), as appropriate.

5.4.3 We will notify the named Social Worker if:

- A child subject to a child protection plan is at risk of permanent exclusion
- There is an unexplained absence of a child who is subject to a child protection plan
- It has been agreed as part of any child protection plan or core group plan.

5.4.4. We will regularly review and concerns if necessary, as detailed in KCSIE and will follow LA and MSP procedures if there is a need to re-refer or to escalate.

## **5.5 CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING**

5.5.1 Staff will ensure that confidentiality protocols are followed and under no circumstances will they disclose any information about children outside of their professional role.

5.5.2 Information about children will only be shared with other members of staff on a need-to-know basis

5.5.3 All staff and volunteers understand that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies, in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This is a matter of routine.

5.5.4 We have arrangements in place that set out clearly the process and principles for sharing information within school and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required. This includes an agreed rationale for gaining consent, when

and what to share, when and what not to share and systems for recording these decisions.

5.5.5 We understand that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. (KCSiE Part 2:119)

## **5.6 CHILD PROTECTION (CP), CHILD IN NEED (CiN) & TEAM AROUND THE CHILD/FAMILY MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

- 5.6.1 A child protection conference will be held by Social Care if it is considered that the child is suffering or at risk of significant harm.
- 5.6.2 We will attend and contribute to initial and review CP conferences, CiN conferences and relevant multi-agency meetings, including core groups. DSL also attend all meetings out of hours and those not in termtime.
- 5.6.3 Members of staff who are asked to attend a child protection conference or other core group meetings (either in person or virtually) about an individual pupil/family will need to have as much relevant updated information about the child as possible and will send a report, using the most up-to-date proforma to the Chair within the required timescales, at least 48 hours before the meeting.
- 5.6.4 Our reports will always include the voice of the child, which is especially important where there may be barriers to communication.
- 5.6.2 We will discuss and share reports with the parents/carers before the conference.
- 5.6.3 All relevant staff will be confident in using the tools which are part of the Signs of Safety approach

## **5.7 CONCERNS/DISCLOSURES BY CHILDREN, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

- 5.7.1 Any concern, disclosure or expression of disquiet made by a child will be listened to seriously and acted upon as quickly as possible to safeguard his or her welfare.
- 5.7.2 All staff and volunteers must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

5.7.3 We will make sure that the child or adult who has expressed the concern or made the complaint will be informed not only about the action to be taken but also where possible about the length of time required to resolve the complaint.

5.7.4 We will endeavour to keep the child or adult informed about the progress of the complaint/expression of concern.

## **5.8 LEARNING FROM SERIOUS CASES**

5.8.1 The MSP will always undertake a child practice review or serious case review (SCR) when a child dies (including death by suicide) and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in their death. The purpose of the SCR is to:

- Find out if there are any lessons to be learnt from the case about how local professionals and agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- Identify what those lessons are, how they will be acted on and what is expected to change as a result of the serious case review.
- Improve inter-agency working to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

5.8.2. If required we will provide an individual management report for a SCR and will cooperate fully with implementing outcomes of the review including reviewing policy, practice and procedures as required.

5.8.3 Our DSL will keep up to date with the findings from SCRs and other learning reviews nationally and in Manchester, share the learning and review our safeguarding procedures if relevant.

## **6. THE CURRICULUM**

We are committed to promoting emotional health and wellbeing and to supporting the development of the skills needed to help keep children safe and healthy. This includes face to face teaching, blended learning and online learning as needed in response to any crisis situation that may arise.

6.1 All children have access to an appropriate curriculum, differentiated to meet their needs. They are encouraged to express and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a variety of activities and have access to a range of cultural opportunities which promote the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and empathy for others.

- 6.2. This enables them to develop the necessary skills to build self-esteem, respect others, support those in need, resolve conflict without resorting to violence, questions and challenge and to make informed choices in later life.
- 6.3 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons will provide opportunities for children and young people to discuss and debate a range of subjects including lifestyles, family patterns, religious beliefs and practices and human rights issues. Please refer to our updated Sex and Relationship Policy for information about the new statutory guidance.
- 6.4 We take account of the latest advice and guidance provided to help address specific vulnerabilities and forms of grooming and exploitation e.g. Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse, Radicalisation, 'Honour-based' Abuse, including Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation & breast ironing, Modern Slavery and County Lines.
- 6.5 All children know that there are adults in our school/setting whom they can approach in confidence if they are in difficulty or feeling worried and that their concerns will be taken seriously and treated with respect.
- 6.6 Children are encouraged to contribute to the development of policies and SIP plans through working parties and pupil voice.
- 6.7 Children are taught about safeguarding including online safety and for some children, this will take a more personalised or contextualised approach, such as more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children. (KCSiE Part 2)

## **7 . ONLINE-SAFETY**

- 7.1 Online safety is a safeguarding issue and we understand that children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our whole school approach empowers us to protect and educate pupils/students and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The purpose of Internet use in our school is to help raise educational standards, promote pupil achievement, and support the professional work of staff as well as enhance our management information and business administration.

- 7.2 We consider the 4C areas of risk to inform our online safety policy and ensure this is a running and interrelated theme when developing other relevant policies and procedures.
- 7.3 The Internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> century life for education, business and social interaction and we have a duty to provide children with quality access to it as part of their learning experience. Our policy on the use of children's personal mobile phones and smart technology is clearly outlined in our child/parent agreement.
- 7.4 We will ensure that appropriate filtering methods (without 'over-blocking') are in place to ensure that pupils are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material. We use a system called Sophos and reports are sent daily to the Headteacher.
- 7.5 We will encourage children to use Social Media safely, including opportunities for them to think and discuss the issues and to check their sources of information.
- 7.6 We will ensure that children do not misuse their devices whilst in school. We have a ESafety code of conduct and Children complete two Esafety lessons at the start of each school year with regular updates.
- 7.7 We have separate acceptable use policies (AUPs) for both staff and children. This covers the use of all technologies and platforms used, both on and offsite. Also refer to our Staff Code of Conduct.
- 7.8 We follow the MSP guidelines 'Safeguarding online guidelines for minimum standards' and the advice on the UK Safer Internet Website. We are also working towards 360 Accreditation, as recommended by the LA Audit Team.
- 7.9 We work with parents to promote good practice in keeping children safe online, including to support their children learning at home. We provide workshops and resources for parents and up to date information on our website and weekly newsletter.
- 7.10 We ensure that all staff adhere to safe and responsible online behaviours when providing home learning and communicating with families. See remote learning Policy.
- 7.11 As technology, and the risks and harms associated with it, evolve and



change rapidly, we will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our children face. (KCSiE Part 2, 134-147)

## **8. SAFER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION OF STAFF**

8.1 Our recruitment and selection policies and processes adhere to the DfE guidance KCSiE and the LA model policy for Safer Recruitment (Appendices A & D)

8.2 Our safeguarding culture and vigilance, in conjunction with our policies and processes, will deter and prevent people unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment or volunteering opportunities at our school. These measures are outlined below and expanded in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

- All those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training and at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- Our job adverts will include safeguarding requirements and the schools /colleges commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Our job adverts will make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken, including online checks
- We understand the process around filtering offences
- Our application form will include the statement that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity.
- We do not accept CVs in place of an application form.
- Shortlisted applicants will be asked to complete a self -declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children
- Applicants must sign a declaration confirming information given is true
- References are requested by the school/college upon offer of a job and open references are not acceptable
- Our selection techniques are pre-arranged and questions structured to understand suitability, skills and motivation for the role

- We will investigate at interview if any concerns have come to light about the candidate through DBS or online checks.
  - We involve pupils/students in the process in a meaningful way
  - All information in the decision-making process is recorded along with the decisions made
  - Correct pre-employment checks are carried out and appropriately stored on the single central record
  - We understand and complete appropriate processes to determine if there are any prohibitions, directions, sanctions disqualifications or restrictions related to the candidate
  - We understand the check which need to be made for individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK
  - We adhere to duties which must be performed in relation to agency and third party staff, contractors, trainees or student teachers, visitors and volunteers
  - We remain vigilant about safeguarding beyond the recruitment process and ensure commitment is evident to the safety and welfare of our children as enshrined in our ethos
- 8.3 The Headteacher and Governing body will ensure that all external staff and volunteers, including out of hours organisations using our school site have been recruited safely, including DBS checks as appropriate.
- 8.5 The school maintains a single central record of all recruitment checks undertaken.
- 8.6. Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.
- 8.7 Written notification will be requested from any agency or third party organisation used by us to confirm that the organisation has carried out the statutory recruitment checks.
- 8.8 We will not keep copies of DBS certificates, either electronically or in paper files
- 8.9 Risk assessments are carried out on all volunteer activities as required.

## **MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS AGAINST STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS**

- 9.1 We follow the DfE guidance KCSiE, Section 4, when dealing with allegations made against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors applying the appropriate level of concern criteria and managing accordingly
- 9.2 We work closely with the police, children's social care and MCC LADO when a risk of harm is indicated
- 9.3 The welfare of the child/ren is paramount when considering an allegation and before contacting the LADO we make careful enquiries to help determine facts and foundation to the allegation, aware of not jeopardising any future police investigation
- 9.4 We consider allegations that may meet the harms threshold and those allegations/concerns that do not, referred to as 'low level concerns'
- 9.5 The harms threshold indicates that a person would pose a risk of harm if they have-
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
  - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
  - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour that may have happened outside school, known as transferable risk)
- 9.6 Our Dealing with Allegations Guidance and this Policy detail the processes and responses to reporting harm threshold cases and also managing their conclusions.
- 9.7 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold may include
- Suspicions or nagging doubts about a member of staff
  - Complaints
  - Disclosures made by child, parent/carer or another adult within or outside of school
  - Inappropriate conduct outside of work
  - Those raised during recruitment and vetting processes
- 9.8 Our open and transparent culture enables us to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early thus minimizing the risk of

abuse

- 9.9 Although low level concerns may not meet the harm threshold, they are not insignificant.
- 9.10 All low level concerns are reported to the headteacher and may also be self-referred (KCSiE provides further clarity on processes- 432-434)
- 9.11 Our Managing Allegations Policy details the processes and conclusion of low level concerns and guidance about including information in references.
- 9.12 All allegations made against a member of staff, including supply staff, volunteers, contractors or security staff working on site, will be dealt with quickly and fairly and in a way that provides effective protection for the child while at the same time providing support for the person against whom the allegation is made.
- 9.13 We ensure that all staff are aware of how to raise a concern, including anonymously as a whistleblower.
- 9.14 Historic allegations will be referred to the police.

## **10.SAFETY ON & OFF SITE**

- 10.1 Our site is secure with safeguards in place to prevent any unauthorised access and also to prevent children leaving the site unsupervised.
- 10.2 We have good up to date knowledge of our local area and any safeguarding risks to the wider community.
- 10.3 All visitors, including visiting speakers, are subject to our safeguarding protocols while on site and will be supervised at all times, if no checks have been obtained. It may be necessary to undertake an assessment of the education value, age appropriateness and content of the visitors itinerary.
- 10.4 Visitors who are in school in a professional capacity will have their ID checked and assurance sought that they have an appropriate DBS check
- 10.5 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of a contractor, who is to work in our school, has been subject to the appropriate level

of DBS check. We are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances and set out our safeguarding requirements in any contacts between school and the contractor's organisation. We will always check the identities of contractors and their staff on arrival.

10.6 We operate a responsible booking protocol and will carry out appropriate checks on all organisations which request to hire our facilities.

10.7 When the school is let, if services or activities are provided by the governing body or proprietor, under the direct supervision or management of school/college staff, the school arrangements for child protection will apply.

10.8 When the school is let and services or activities are provided by another body, we seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed) and ensure there are arrangements in place to liaise with school/college on these matters where appropriate. Please refer to our Lettings Policy.

10.9 Safeguarding arrangements should be included in any lease or hire agreement as a condition of use and occupation of the school/college premises – failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

10.10 We exercise due diligence to prevent any organisation or speaker from using our facilities to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff. Our Headteacher authorises all speakers.

10.11 We have a work experience placement policy and procedures in place. We will ensure that any person supervising a child on a placement has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check.

10.12 All school visits are fully risk-assessed and no child will be taken off-site without parental permission.

10.13 If international exchanges were to be considered, we will liaise with our partner schools abroad to establish a shared understanding of the arrangements in place both before and during the visit. We will ensure we are satisfied that these are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard effectively every child who will take part in the exchange. We may also feel it necessary to contact the relevant foreign embassy of High

Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside the UK. Currently we do not take part in any Internal Exchanges.

10.14 We have a Health & Safety policy for contacting parents and for reporting to the emergency services, including police and hospitals.

## 11 . COMPLEX SAFEGUARDING

Serious violence

11.1 We are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime

Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation

11.2.1 Children's Social Care will refer cases of child exploitation, criminal or sexual, to the Complex Safeguarding Hub and we will contact the professionals' advice line for further support.

11.2.2 We understand that schools are one of many locations where children can be targeted and recruited into county lines and recognise additional specific indicators that may be present when a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines. (KCSiE, Annex B)

## **12. PEER ON PEER ABUSE (Including Sexual violence and sexual harassment)**

12.1 Through training we ensure that all staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

12.2 The senior leadership team and governing body are responsible for ensuring that procedures exist to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and consider how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. There is a clear procedure on how victims of peer on peer abuse will be supported.

12.3 All staff are aware of peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to, bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment, up skirting (which is now a criminal

offence), physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, pulling hair, sexting and initiating /instigating violence and rituals. These issues will be addressed through our school/college curriculum and assemblies throughout the year.

12.4 All staff are expected to refer to HM Government guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advise for practitioners' for further help in identifying signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect.

12.5 Staff members who are concerned that a child might have been / being abused by another child should follow safeguarding and child protection procedures and report to the DSL.

12.6 In respect of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, the school/college takes a proactive approach to prevent such incidents from taking place. Throughout school/college, safeguarding is taught as part of our curriculum. We appreciate that whilst adults in school are working hard to keep children safe, children also play a large part in keeping themselves and their peers safe from abuse and neglect. An age-appropriate curriculum is rolled out in school to build capacity amongst our students in their understanding of particular issues, and what actions they can take to be safe. We incorporate healthy relationships, people who help us, British values etc. in to our curriculum time in an age appropriate way for the year groups in school. Students are taught to understand the issue and meaning of consent as delivered in the RSHE curriculum.

12.7 Students will be made aware of what constitutes unreasonable pressure from peers to engage in risk-taking or inappropriate behaviour, and of how to report their concerns. Allegations of abuse by a peer will be treated as seriously as allegations of abuse from an adult, it should never be dismissed as normal behaviour.

12.8 Robust systems have been established in school for dealing with safeguarding concerns. All allegations of abuse and neglect, whether suspected or known will be treated seriously and in confidentiality. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We will respond and manage any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment in line with guidance added to KCSIE 2022 and within the MSP website. We will follow school procedures outlined in this Policy for handling allegations and managing information.

12.9 All information is handled in accordance with the school's Information Sharing Policy, which is written in line with HM Government guidance.

12.10 When incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment occur the schools response is ultimately decided on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking the lead role, using their professional judgement. Incidents of peer-on-peer abuse may need to be

dealt with in various ways. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with via the schools anti-bullying policy and/or behaviour policy. Incidents which take place outside of school may need to be addressed in school however the school are clear that where professional advice needs to be sought from external partners, it will be.

12.11 The schools Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult children's social care on matters relating to the safety and welfare of a child and will consult the police in respect of matters relating to a possible crime. The school will put a proportionate and supportive package of care in place for those affected.

12.12 School leaders are aware that detailed advice to support schools and colleges has been published. The advice is available and includes, what sexual violence and sexual harassment look like, important context to be aware of, related legal responsibilities for schools and colleges and advice on a whole school or college approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

12.13 The school adopts the UK Council for Child Internet Safety guidance 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: How to respond to incidents and safeguarding young people' in respect of our response to sexting. This guidance clearly sets out how to handle incidents, should they occur and what preventative steps can be taken to educate young people.

12.14 Responding to reports of sexual violence/harassment:

There are four likely scenarios for school to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

### **1. Manage internally**

- In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support.
- The response will be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

### **2. Early help**

- In line with 1 above, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions, but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.
- Full details of the early help process are in Chapter one of Working Together



to Safeguard Children.

- Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school or college policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.
- Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

### **3. Referrals to children's social care**

- Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, school will make a referral to local children's social care.
- At the referral to children's social care stage, schools will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.
- If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.
- Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) will work alongside, and cooperate with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.
- Schools will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school or college. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school or college takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment as per paragraph 275 of [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, 2021](#) will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator, any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all children at the school should be immediate.
- In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

### **4. Reporting to the Police**

- Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above).
- It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.
- At this stage, schools will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.
- Where a report has been made to the police, the school should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. DSLs are aware of local arrangements.
- In some cases, it may become clear very quickly, that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the school continue to engage with specialist support for the victim as required.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

11.15 After recent government action to tackle the issues raised by testimonies given on the Everyone's Invited website, NSPCC has been commissioned to run the helpline which we will publicise in school and on our website – 0800 136 663. This number is for children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse, adult victims, parents and carers of victims and professionals working with children and young people. It is to report or share incidents which have happened both in and outside of educational settings.