

THE WORDSLEY SCHOOL
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2024-2025
FOR RATIFICATION

Policy adopted by the Governing Body of The Wordsley School	
Date adopted by the Governing Body	
Signed by the Governing Body	

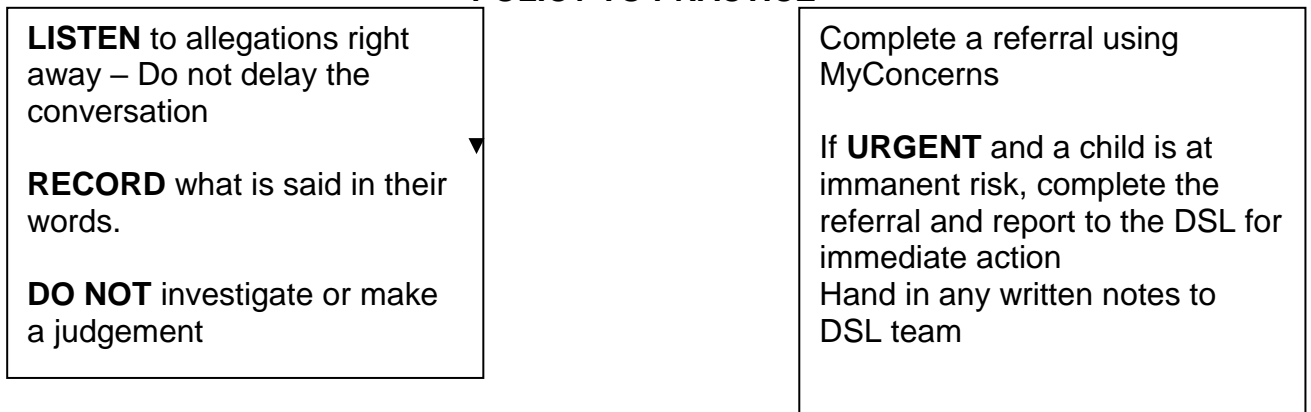
THE WORDSLEY SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OVERVIEW

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and neglect.

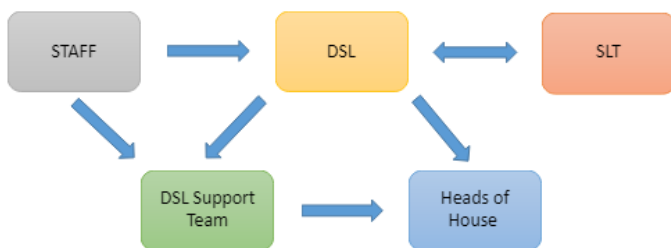
AIMS

- To establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe and secure are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- To ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- To follow procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy and complete the referral using MyConcerns.

POLICY TO PRACTICE



Safeguarding Process for information



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DSL Team will review the concern and address as appropriate through:

Referral to MASH/Early Help
 HOH support
 Internal Support –
 Nurse/Counsellor/EB/MC/SK/SWe

The main task for all staff is to listen to the child and not interrupt and make a note of the discussion. Staff must NOT give a confidentiality promise to the child.

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1. RATIONALE

The Wordsley School is located in Wordsley, Stourbridge and reflects the multicultural community surrounding us. We have 946 pupils currently on roll from Year 7 to Year 11.

The purpose of the whole-school child protection policy is to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. This policy makes explicit the School's commitment to the development of good practice and procedures in order that child protection referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child, and has been developed in accordance with the procedures of the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership – DSPP.

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

The Wordsley School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Because of the day-to-day contact with children and young people, education staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in children's behaviour or their failure to develop. It is therefore important;

'to be alert to the possibility of abuse occurring, be aware of the procedures to be followed if you have suspicions and have the confidence to follow those procedures.'

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

The Wordsley School recognises its legal duty under s.175/157 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting them from "significant harm". The protection of our pupils from suffering or being likely to suffer significant harm is the responsibility of the school and wider community, superseding any other considerations. The following documents, circulars and guidance for good practice govern child protection work at The Wordsley School.

Safeguarding Children Procedures

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/early-years-and-childcare/providers/safeguarding-for-childcare-practitioners/safeguarding-supporting-documents/>

(please see for links)

- Dealing with a disclosure school guidance (See Appendix 1)
- [Children Act 1989](#)

- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children \(DfE\) December 2023](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE\) September 2024](#)
 - Section 5B of the [FGM Act 2003](#) (as inserted by section 74 of other [Serious Crimes Act 2015](#))
 - [Information Sharing 2018](#)
 - Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings (October 2015)
 - What do you do if you are worried a child is being abused March 2015 (See Appendix 2)
 - [The Prevent Duty 2023](#)
 - [Children missing in education 2016](#) and at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation.
 - [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#)

2. PREVENTION

The six main elements of the policy are:

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils, who have been abused in accordance with his/her Child Protection Plan
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- Ensuring there are links with other safeguarding policies and practice; for example, physical intervention, anti-bullying, behaviour policy, attendance, medical conditions, first aid, intimate care, emergency evacuation, educational visits, sexual exploitation, sexting, disability, homophobic abuse, racism, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation radicalisation and extremism. (Further guidance on these issues is available from school).

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult, help prevention. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school, whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm

3. SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Headteacher	Ashley Weatherhogg
Designated Safeguarding Lead STRATEGIC	James Griffiths jgriffiths@wordsley.dudley.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead OPERATIONAL	Sally Ketteringham Sketteringham@wordsley.dudley.sch.uk 07554 711808
Deputy Safeguarding Leads	Scott Wright-Evans - Online/ESafety swrightevans@wordsley.dudley.sch.uk Emma Burgess - Looked After Lead eburgess@wordsley.dudley.sch.uk
SENCo	Sarah Austin
Online Safety Lead Filtering & Monitoring	Scott Wright-Evans
Safeguarding Governors	Mrs I Wyld
LADO	Yvonne Nelson-Brown Yvonne.Nelson-Brown@dudley.gov.uk
Virtual Schools Head	EmmaThomas Emma.Thomas@dudley.gov.uk

4. PROCEDURES

The Wordsley School will:

- Ensure we have a designated safeguarding lead for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school is Mrs S Ketteringham. Mrs E Burgess and Mr Scott Wright-Evans also form part of the Safeguarding team as Deputy DSL's.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection. The designated Governors for Child Protection for the school is Mrs I Wyld.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents/guardians have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations

in the school prospectus. Parents/guardians should be made aware of the policies and procedures.

- Ensure that parents/guardians are aware that this policy is available on request, and make the policy available on the school website.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection meetings.
- Develop links with other agencies that support the child such as Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Investigation and Education Psychology Service.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations or held securely online using the MyConcerns software.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of what to do if there are concerns around a child. Appendix 1 refers to what to do if you are concerned. A multi-agency referral (MARF) must be completed when making a referral and can be accessed from the [DSPP](#) website. The DSL should be consulted before completion of this form.

5. ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has ultimate responsibility and management oversight and accountability for safeguarding and child protection. Safeguarding is undertaken by a team at The Wordsley School – James Griffiths (Strategic Lead), Sally Ketteringham (Operational Lead), Scott Wright-Evans (Deputy) and Emma Burgess (Deputy).

When the school has concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the team, will decide what steps should be taken and should advise the Headteacher.

The responsibilities are as follows:-

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care or the Police in cases where a crime may have been committed.
- When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)/Headteacher and DSL to support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations/coordinating child protection activity.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
- Ensure that this policy is available publicly and parents/guardians are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children, particularly in relation to Early Help
- Work closely with Mental Health Leads
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding and takes the lead of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school, this is included in the DSL's job description
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers (LADO) for safeguarding and child protection concerns as appropriate.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Child protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

(Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services -DfE, 2018). Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels that those staff having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and / or family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, and when.

Safeguarding processes will also follow the school GDPR policy, but 'The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, 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 promote the welfare and protect the safety of the children. (KCSIE 2024 p34: para 119)

"Understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner. It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk, and • for schools, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met.³⁴ For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harm test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR."(KCSIE 2024 p31: para 119)

My Concerns (software that is owned by One Team Logic Ltd, who are externally regulated and GDPR secure) will provide a means of reporting and record keeping, through a secured log on. Only staff with DSL responsibility will have access to children's' online records. Where paper copies of evidence and records are concerned, child protection records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic records. Individual files will be kept for each child: the school will not keep family files. Files will be kept for at least the period during which the child is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance.

Access to these records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Team will be restricted.

Parents/guardians will be aware of information held on their children and kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff. General communications with parents/guardians will be in line with any home school policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility. The Wordsley School will not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this places the child at risk of significant harm.

If a pupil moves from our school, child protection records will be forwarded on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school, with due regard to their confidential

nature and in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records. Direct contact between the two schools may be necessary, especially on transfer from primary to secondary schools. The Wordsley School will record where and to whom the records have been passed and the date.

If sending by post pupil records will be sent by “Special/Recorded Delivery”. For audit purposes a note of all pupil records transferred or received should be kept in either paper or electronic format. This will include the child’s name, date of birth, where and to whom the records have been sent and the date sent and/or received.

If a pupil is permanently excluded and moves to a Pupil Referral Unit, child protection records will be forwarded on to the relevant organisation.

Where a vulnerable young person is moving to a Further Education establishment, consideration should be given to the student’s wishes and feelings on their child protection information being passed on in order that the FE establishment can provide appropriate support.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNORS AND GOVERNING BODIES

It is the responsibility of the governing bodies to ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regards to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools are effective and comply with the law at all times.

The statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 paragraph 81s states: “Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge, to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.”

This is fulfilled by the Operational DSL in annual training and meetings with the Safeguarding Link Governor.

8. INVOLVING PARENTS / CARERS

In general, we will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before approaching other agencies, and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. Appropriate staff will approach parents/carers after consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may

increase the risk of significant harm to the child. Parents/carers will be informed about our Child Protection Policy through: school website.

9. THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

The designated teacher for Children Looked After (CLA) at The Wordsley School is Emma Burgess. They are responsible for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after. The designated teacher will work closely with the Virtual School Head, and the Lead DSL to ensure that pupil premium funding is best used to support the progress of the looked after child.

10. EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site the school will undertake checks to ensure that they provide adequate safeguarding arrangements. This will be actioned by Learning for Life upon application of use.

When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, the school will ensure that the proprietors of the activity/venue operate safe practices to maintain the safety of our children/young people. The member of staff leading the trip, will also need to consult the DSL team regarding the pupils attending, and if pertinent, will inform the lead teacher of any support that needs to be in place.

If an incident occurs, the lead teacher will inform the Lead DSL to seek advice. Staff can access support from the Lead DSL at anytime. The school will liaise with investigating agencies in the locality relevant to where the concern has taken place.

11. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Wordsley School will follow Safer Recruitment processes -Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership (DSPP) procedures, which will include the following:

- Declaration of the intent to undertake a DBS check in the advertisement
- Ensuring that at least one member of the interview panel has attended DBS Safer Recruitment training.
- Ensuring that references are gained before interview
- Ensuring that a safeguarding question is included in the interview
- Ensuring that any gaps in employment are explored at interview
- Undertake a DBS check at the relevant level
- Undertake online checks for appointments
- Only conduct social media checks on candidates that have been shortlisted
- All Governors now require an Enhanced DBS check

- The Prohibition of teaching checks must be completed for everyone engaged in 'teaching work', whether a qualified teacher or not: and recorded on the Single Central Record

The Wordsley School will follow the "Managing Allegations Against Staff (DSPP Procedures). The Headteacher will deal with allegations made against school staff. All allegations against the Headteacher will be referred to the Chair of Governors and the Local Authority Designating Officer.

In addition to this The Wordsley School will have routine systems for continually monitoring the performance of staff ensuring compliance with both child protection procedures and the code of good practice. All staff within The Wordsley School will adhere to the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Children and Young People in Education Settings (April 2020). This covers a wide range of issues around staff conduct e.g. Use of Mobile Phones, remote working etc. All staff have access to the counselling service within Dudley Council. Low Level concerns such as these will be addressed by the Headteacher in the first instance.

If any concerns or allegations are made against members of staff, they will be discussed with the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO - Yvonne Nelson Brown) by the relevant school person dealing with the allegation. It is useful at this stage to also provide full names of the member of staff and child involved in the allegation, the child's date of birth, address and details of any previous concerns, as this will avoid delay. All allegations against people who work with children will be passed on to the LADO in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children (reviewed 2022, published 2018) and the DSPP Safeguarding Children Procedures. A LADO Referral and Monitoring form will need to be completed. allegations@dudley.gcsx.gov.uk

If staff have concerns about a fellow colleague, they should follow the Whistle Blowing Procedures.

The NSCPCC whistle blowing helpline is available for staff within our School, who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285. The email address is help@nscpp.org.uk

11.1 REFERRAL TO DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

Any employee who is dismissed or resigns due to a child protection case will be referred to the DBS, who will consider the future risk and harm the individual poses to vulnerable groups including children.

The Single Central record must be in place and include all the areas covered in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023). Further advice on this can be sought from Finance and HR Manager.

12. WHISTLEBLOWING

All staff and volunteers are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, are in place for such concerns to be raised with the schools senior leadership team. A copy is located on staffroom noticeboard.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

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.

13. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Wordsley School will ensure that:

- All staff are kept up to date with Child Protection issues by formal training taking place regularly annually; online courses, external training and in-house training provided throughout the year
- Clear reminders of all procedures will be given out to all staff on the training day at the start of every academic year, with frequent reminders at teacher and teaching assistant meetings, meetings with lunchtime supervisors, training events, weekly staff briefings and subsequent training days
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will take part in advanced level training (Core Working Together) at least every two years and the DSL refresher training.
- All policies and procedures will follow DfE guidance on Child Protection issues
- School Governors will be kept informed about procedures through the Child Protection Link Governor
- Good monitoring takes place of students identified as at risk
- The pastoral team and SENCO works closely with outside agencies to share information and coordinate support for the pupil.
- According to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023), the Headteacher and all other staff who work with children will undertake training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Child Protection effectively. This will be kept up to date by refresher training at regular intervals for all staff. A Training Record is kept for all adults working in contact with children.

14. CURRICULUM

Child protection and wider child safety issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate. Relevant issues will be addressed through the curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationship education, e-safety, bullying and extremism.

All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example bullying, on-line safety, equal opportunities, handling, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure a whole school approach. Staff will follow Dudley Safeguarding Partnership Children Procedures if there are concerns around child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence / sexual assaults and sexting.

Our Child Protection policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that pupils are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

Our curriculum will aim to cover relevant issues through RSE, SMSC, British Values, e-safety, assemblies, approved visitors etc. We will provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. Relevant issues will be addressed through the RSE curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationship education, e-safety, bullying and aspects of the prevent agenda. Issues will also be addressed through other areas of the curriculum, for example in English, History, PE and Art.

15. DEALING WITH CONCERNS AND DISCLOSURES – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff need to be aware of how to manage a concern about a child or young people. The need to be aware that:

- A child may disclose something that has upset or harmed them
- Someone else might report something that a child has told them, or that they believe that a child has been or is being harmed
- A child might show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no explanation
- A child's behaviour may suggest he or she is being abused
- The behaviour or attitude of one of the workers towards a child may cause concern
- A child demonstrates worrying behaviour towards other children.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU LEAVE SCHOOL WITHOUT DISCUSSING YOUR CONCERNS WITH SOMEONE OR REPORTING THE CONCERN USING MY CONCERNS ONLINE.

Only a minority of children actively disclose abuse. Most child abuse, is disclosed accidentally or through observation by an adult of a child's behaviour, words and

physical appearance. When a child does disclose abuse, this needs to be taken very seriously. It is important that any disclosure is dealt with appropriately, both for the wellbeing of the child and also to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise any legal action against the abuser.

Staff should be aware that to consult with the designated safeguarding lead **does not mean a referral has been made**. This decision is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead(s) for child protection who will contact the appropriate agency as and when required.

If you are unhappy with the response you receive from your designated safeguarding lead, all staff have the right to contact Dudley Children's Services directly.

Resolution & Escalation process can be used. Further support can be found at: <https://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/safeguarding/child/work-with-children-young-people/safeguarding-children-procedures/>

The school will always discuss concerns with parents/carers unless to do so would:

- Place the child at risk of significant harm or further risk of significant harm.
- Place a vulnerable adult at risk of harm
- Compromise any enquiries that need to be undertaken by children's social care or the police

Our school will endeavour to ensure that parents/guardians/carers have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.

16. PROCEDURES FOR WHEN SOMEONE IS CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

- **All concerns for children and young people should be recorded using MyConcerns online recording system.**
- All concerns should be recorded as soon as possible and shared (within 1 hour) with the DSL in person when you consider the disclosure to be **Urgent**.
- All verbal conversations to be promptly recorded in writing at the time or after using MyConcerns on line system.
- All concerns of significant harm should be referred to the Local Authority Children's Services (Multi Agency Support Hub - Dudley Front Door) without delay and within one hour of the disclosure.
- All concerns shared with the designated safeguarding lead should be considered alongside Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board Multi Agency thresholds (Child Protection, Early Help offer)
- All concerns of allegations in relation to staff and volunteers harmful behaviour should be referred to the Headteacher (if the concern is in relation to the Headteacher the Chair of Governors should be informed without delay for onward referral to LADO).

17. WHAT INFORMATION WILL YOU NEED WHEN MAKING A REFERRAL?

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible; such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents/guardians, other siblings, chronology of previous concerns.

Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

18. RESPONSES FROM PARENTS & GUARDIANS

Research and experience indicates that the following responses from parents/guardians may suggest a cause for concern across all categories of abuse:-

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed;
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development;
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries;
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child;
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child;
- Dismissive of alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse;
- Parents/guardians request removal of the child from home; or
- Inability to address violence between adults in the household.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 24hrs. This should be done on online at <https://childrensocialcare.dudley.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/safeguarding>. This is the Front Door for support

Call Dudley Front Door, Initial Response Team,

Tel: 0300 555 0050 Monday–Thursday 8.45am–5.15pm, Friday 8.45am–4.45pm

Tel: 0300 555 8574 Emergency Response Team

Some of our pupils may not reside within Dudley Local Authority and we are aware that we should locate the number for the child's Local Authority's child protection referral team.

19. STAFF SUPPORT

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and seek further support as appropriate.

The Wordsley School is committed to ensuring all staff are trained to a high standard. The detail around this is set out below.

According to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'(2024):

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.

In addition to their formal training, as set out above, their knowledge and skills should be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meetings with other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

The Governing body should ensure that all staff and themselves, undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training should be regularly updated and in line with advice from DSCB.

In addition all staff members should ensure regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e.Bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

20. DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

There are four types of child abuse. They are defined in the UK Government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education; statutory guidance for schools and colleges, September 2024 as follows:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

All staff are aware of safeguarding issues and aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

20.1 PHYSICAL ABUSE

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;
- Bite marks;
- Round burn marks;
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given;
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;
- Bald patches;
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted;
- Fear of medical help;
- Fear of changing for PE;
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

20.2 EMOTIONAL ABUSE

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

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;
- Over-reaction to mistakes;
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders;
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;
- Self harming, drug or solvent abuse;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Running away;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Appetite disorders – anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

N.B.: Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment.

20.3 SEXUAL ABUSE

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge;
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching;
- Reluctance to go home;
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness;
- Refusal to communicate;
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains;
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia;
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse;
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation;
- Unusual compliance;
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling;
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately;
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group;
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

20.4 NEGLECT

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger;
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food;
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness;
- Frequently dirty or unkempt;
- Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather;
- Poor school attendance or often late for school;
- Poor concentration;
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour;
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated;
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight;
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially;
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings;
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers

21. SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

You should also be aware of specific safeguarding issues, including:

Children Absent from education | missing children and adults | fabricated or induced illness | children missing from home or care | bullying / cyberbullying | relationship

abuse | private fostering | forced marriage | drugs | trafficking | faith abuse | hate | domestic violence | sexting | county lines | mental health issues | child sexual exploitation | preventing radicalisation | female genital mutilation | gender based violence | gangs | youth violence

22. DOMESTIC ABUSE

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members.

Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.

Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16).

However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

We work with other key partners and share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm. The impact on children who are exposed to Domestic abuse or suffer it in their own relationships have been made clear.

We receive alerts from Operation Encompass and DART, which are then actioned to offer support to pupils affected.

23. PSYCHOLOGICAL, PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, FINANCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

Controlling behaviour is: A range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: An act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.

24. CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

All staff are aware of safeguarding issues that can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. This could, for example, include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Staff are clear as to the school policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse as defined in the anti-bullying, school's behaviour policy and broader child protection procedures.

Children and young people who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others within the school community through a multi-agency risk assessment.

We ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims.

Signs that a child may be suffering from child on child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include:

- Failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected;
- Physical injuries;
- Experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing;
- Becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach

aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks;
suffering from nightmares or lack of
sleep or sleeping too much;

- Broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse;

- Changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age;

- Abusive behaviour towards others.

Abuse affects children very differently. The above list is by no means exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse.

Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being harmed or abused by their peers) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.

If cause for concern is raised around Child on Child abuse, the investigation to ascertain information will be carried out following Heads of House using Pastoral procedures and initially recorded on the green incident slips. Once a decision has been reached around the concern, it will be recorded under safeguarding and logged on My Concerns. The DSL team will then work with the relevant HOH and SLT, to consider how to proceed and which intentions/referrals are required.

Raising awareness of Child on Child abuse will be addressed through curriculum content and themed assemblies to help minimise risk.

In addition, some pupils may be vulnerable due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, either because they are subject to homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic bullying or because of negative responses from parents/carers or others, which may result in increased risk of self-harm, suicide or homelessness.

Several studies also provide evidence that LGBT+ young people may be at increased risk of becoming victims of CSE. Our schools should therefore ensure that they are aware of the increased risk factors and access appropriate support for these young people when required.

25. SEXUAL VIOLENCE

When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

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

25.2 Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of

her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

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

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

26. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

26.1 When referring to sexual harassment the school means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When the school references sexual harassment, it does so in the context of pupil on pupil sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a pupil's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment, which might include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats.

Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

26.3 All Staff should challenge any pupil that is displaying behaviour that can be considered to be sexual harassment. If a pupil has been challenged, this must be recorded using MyConcerns, for the DSL and/or HOH to review. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an

important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

26.4 The school will consider ages and the stages of development of the pupils.

Sexual behaviour between pupils can be considered harmful if one of the pupils is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the pupils is pre-pubescent and the other is not. The 'Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool' could be used to help when considering harmful sexual behaviours.

27. SAFEGUARDING

27.1 The school's approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment will be reflected in the broader approach to safeguarding and be part of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and will form part of the school's safeguarding training.

27.2 The basic safeguarding principle is: if a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger, or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children's social care.

27.3 The school will comply with the relevant requirements as set out in the Equality Act 2010 to ensure they do not discriminate against any pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or sexual orientation.

28. PREVENTION

28.1 Preventative education will ensure pupils are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

28.2 The school will deliver preventative education through planned, high-quality Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) during Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) lessons.

29. RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

29.1 Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a member of SLT) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Some situations are statutorily clear:

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape;
- creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal (often referred to as sexting). This includes children making and sharing sexual images and videos of themselves.

29.2 The police will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where there is a report of a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the starting point is it will be passed to the police and a referral to children's social care.

The NSPCC (help@nspcc.org.uk) and the specialist sexual violence sector such as Rape Crisis or The Survivors Trust will also provide support and guidance.

29.3 The school recognises that incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment that occur online (either in isolation or in connection to offline incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. These include the potential for the incident to take place across a number of social media platforms and services and for things to move from platform to platform online.

It also includes the potential for the impact of the incident to extend further than the school's local community (e.g. for images or content to be shared around neighbouring schools) and for a victim (or alleged perpetrator) to become marginalised and excluded by both online and offline communities.

There is also the strong potential for repeat victimisation in the future if abusive content continues to exist somewhere online. The school will seek the support of The UK Safer Internet Centre (helpline@saferinternet.org.uk).

29.4 If the incident involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed through the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). The IWF will make an assessment of whether the image is illegal in line with UK Law. If the image is assessed to be illegal, it will be removed and added to the IWF's Image Hash list.

30. MANAGING THE DISCLOSURE

30.1 All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

30.2 The school will reasonably do all it can to protect the anonymity of any pupils involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. This will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be in place for the pupils involved.

30.3 When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a member of SLT) will make an immediate risk assessment

(Appendix A). Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk assessment will consider:

- the victim;
- the alleged perpetrator;
- the other pupils (and, if appropriate, staff)

30.4 The risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic) and will be kept under review. At all times, the school will be actively considering the risks posed to all the pupils and putting adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially
- important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: might a crime have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- the ages of the pupils involved;
- the developmental stages of the pupils involved;
- any power imbalance between the pupils (e.g. is the alleged perpetrator significantly older);
- if the alleged incident is a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- are there ongoing risks; and
- other related issues and wider context.

30.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with Children's Social Care, the Police and specialist services as required.

31. SAFEGUARDING AND SUPPORTING THE VICTIM

31.1 The school recognises that any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim.

31.2 The school will also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator reasonable distance apart on the school site and on transport to and from the school where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of both pupils and are not perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

31.3 For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing the school site and school transport, will be considered immediately.

31.4 The school will consider every report on a case-by-case basis. When to inform the alleged perpetrator will be a decision that will be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then the school will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator will be informed of the allegations.

However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not prevent the school taking immediate action to safeguard the pupils where required.

31.5 The school will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a Police and children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other pupils in the school. The school will work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions it takes does not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision.

31.6 Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator, any other pupils directly involved in the report and all pupils at the school will be immediate.

31.7 If a pupil is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the pupils at the school and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in light of the behaviour policy, including permanent exclusion.

31.8 Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school will take suitable action, if not already done so consider any suitable action in light of the behaviour policy, including permanent exclusion. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault constitutes a serious breach of discipline and allowing the perpetrator to remain in the school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils).

31.8.1 All of the above will be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements will be kept under review.

31.8.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other pupils. If the Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to Children's Services or the Police against the victim's wishes, this should be handled very carefully, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support should be offered.

31.8.3 In all cases, the school will record and be able to justify its decision making.

31.8.4 If the perpetrator remains in the same school as the victim, the school will be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. This will include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator's timetable.

31.8.5 Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils in the school. The school will ensure

that the victim and alleged perpetrator remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

31.8.6 Where cases are classified as “no further action” (NFA’d) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator will continue.

31.8.7 The school will consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. The needs and wishes of the victim will be paramount and wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis which will include all of the school’s pastoral support systems but if the trauma results in the victim being unable to cope, alternative provision or a move to another school could be considered. This will only be at the request of the victim and following a discussion with parents or carers.

31.8.8 In some cases of sexual harassment, the school or college may take the view that the pupils concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention. It may be appropriate to handle the incident internally utilising the school’s behaviour policy and providing pastoral support.

32. SAFEGUARDING AND SUPPORTING THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR

32.1 The school will provide the alleged perpetrator with an education, providing safeguarding support as appropriate and implementing any discipline sanctions required.

32.2 The school will consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator and the nature of the allegations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator may have unmet needs as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other pupils. These harmful sexual behaviours may be a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. The school will seek advice from social services, specialist sexual violence services and the police.

30.3 An alleged perpetrator may be moved to another educational institution (for any reason) but the school will be made aware fully of the situation and any ongoing support needed.

33. DISCIPLINE AND THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR

32.1 The school will discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard expected of them in line with government advice on 'behaviour and discipline in schools' and the statutory guidance on exclusions.

32.2 Disciplinary action could be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or social services are ongoing. Other investigations will not prevent the school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities of what happened, and imposing a disciplinary sanction on a case-by-case basis. The school will consider if, by taking any action, they would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. Careful liaison with the police and/or social services will help the school make a determination.

Communication with parents/carers

The school will, in most cases, engage with the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportional in the case of sexual harassment and will be considered on a case-to-case basis). The exception to this is if the school suspects informing a parent or carer will put a pupil at additional risk. Advice will be sought from the police and social services.

The school may meet the victim's parents or carers to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim. The school may meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents and carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put in place that impact the alleged perpetrator, such as, moving them out of classes with the victim, reduced timetable, full time in the PILC, possibly moving them to another educational establishment, any disciplinary sanctions and the support for the alleged perpetrator will be discussed.

Risk Assessment is stored on the Safeguarding google drive

34. SEXTING

Electronic forms of communication have developed rapidly in recent years and the vast majority of children have access to a computer and or mobile phone. Children are frequently exposed to internet abuse including sexual abuse and bullying by phone is on the increase. Any child thought to be the victim of such abuse should therefore be regarded as in need of protection.

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.

They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

Sexting may also be called, trading nudes, dirties or pic for pic.

Sexting can be seen as harmless, but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is breaking the law if they:

- Take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- Share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age
- Possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

However, as of January 2016 in England and Wales, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action isn't in the public interest.

Crimes recorded this way are unlikely to appear on future records or checks, unless the young person has been involved in other similar activities which may indicate that they are a risk.

There are many reasons why a young person may want to send a naked or semi-naked picture, video or message to someone else.

- joining in because they think that 'everyone is doing it'
- boosting their self-esteem
- flirting with others and testing their sexual identity
- exploring their sexual feelings
- to get attention and connect with new people on social media
- they may find it difficult to say no if somebody asks them for an explicit image, especially if the person asking is persistent

Staff who have concerns over a pupil's potential involvement in Sexting or are involved in a disclosure, need to refer the details using MyConcerns and speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

35. UP SKIRTING

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 has criminalised the act of 'up skirting'. The Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) defines 'up skirting' as a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person's clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission.

It is not only confined to victims wearing skirts or dresses and equally applies when men or women are wearing kilts, cassocks, shorts or trousers. It is often performed in crowded public places, for example on public transport or at music festivals, which can make it difficult to notice offenders."

Staff who have concerns over a pupil's potential involvement in 'up skirting' or are involved in a disclosure, need to refer the details using MyConcerns and speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

36. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) AND CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

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

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males, females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Further advice can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

36.2 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children's social care. The significant indicators are:

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person

(this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity);

- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults;
- Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items;
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities;
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology; and
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast food outlets.

Please refer to your DSL who will liaise with LOCAL Safeguarding Children Board procedures to consider completion of the screening tool and/or NWG (formally known as the National Working Groups for CSE) risk assessment: www.wlscb.org.uk
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/279511/step_by_step_guide.pdf

37. COUNTY LINES

Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' to supply drugs.

Tragically the young people exploited through 'county lines' can often be seen by professionals as criminals. However, we want these vulnerable children to be recognised as victims of trafficking and exploitation. We want them to receive the support they need to deal with the trauma they have been through.

Gangs are deliberately targeting vulnerable children – those who are homeless, living in care homes or trapped in poverty. These children are unsafe, unloved, or unable to cope, and the gangs take advantage of this.

These gangs groom, threaten or trick children into trafficking their drugs for them. They might threaten a young person physically, or they might threaten the young person's family members. The gangs might also offer something in return for the young person's cooperation – it could be money, food, alcohol, clothes and jewellery, or improved status – but the giving of these gifts will usually be manipulated so that the child feels they are in debt to their exploiter.

However, once they become trapped in county lines, the young people involved feel as if they have no choice but to continue doing what the gangs want.

Potential signs of criminal exploitation and county lines:

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- Being found in areas away from home
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them

- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Unexplained absences from school, college, training or work
- Unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly dishevelled
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

Further information can be found online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Any member of staff who feels a child could be at risk or involved in 'county lines' must refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

38. SERIOUS VIOLENCE

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

- increased absence from school
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the [Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy](#).

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the [Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children](#) and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. [The Youth](#)

[Endowment Fund \(YEF\)](#) Toolkit sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence.

39. HONOUR BASED ABUSE/ VIOLENCE

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

40. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Mandatory reporting commenced in October 2015; where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- A long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- Relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage

- A female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- Unexpected, repeated or prolonged absence from school.
- Academic work suffering.
- She may have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- Spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Staff worried about the risk of FGM occurring to a girl, should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

41. BREAST IRONING

Breast Ironing is practised in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa.

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child-like' for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls' breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, and forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

Breast Ironing in the UK

Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as a 1,000 girls at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) mentions breast ironing on page 83, as part of the section on so-called 'Honour Based Abuse'. Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their school should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Schools need to know the risk level within their communities and tackle the risk as appropriate.

42. FORCED MARRIAGE

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. In the UK it is recognised as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. Honour based violence 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 violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour/Izzat code.

Staff have been briefed on the indicators of possible forced marriage and honour based violence and will refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

43. CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

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

A child absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. The school has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of the school by their parents/guardians and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend the school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

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

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

This guidance is to be considered alongside the School Attendance Policy.

For further information: [Children Missing Education statutory guidance](#) for local authorities 2016

44. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff in our school recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;

- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child;
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment;
- Poor toileting arrangements;
- Lack of stimulation;
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint;
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries;
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication;
- Ill-fitting equipment. for example callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- Misappropriation of a child's finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

Any member of staff who feels a child could be at risk must refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

45. CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBER IN PRISON

Pupils with close family members in prison are at risk of being affected by various consequences, including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO - <https://www.nicco.org.uk/> provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

46. CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds>) and 12-17 year olds (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds>)

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children.

The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool (<https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/>) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

47. HOMELESSNESS

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not,

and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm

48. MODERN SLAVERY

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism Modern (NRM) slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK](#)

49. PREVENT STRATEGY (RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM)

The Wordsley School is actively involved in the Prevent strategy. The Wordsley School has a part to play in fostering shared values and promoting cohesion. Extremist ideology runs counter to the school and British values. Therefore, our community aims to successfully promote respect and tolerance for others, the rights of all to live and study free from persecution of any kind, freedom of speech, democracy, the rule of law and equality of opportunity and treatment. Extremism promotes fear and division and actively seeks to cause destructive relationships between different communities. Our school strategy for preventing extremism has seven key objectives:

1. To promote and reinforce school and British values; to create space for free and open debate; listen and support the learner voice and enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
2. To promote social cohesion by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and to engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society.
3. To ensure student safety and that the school is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
4. To provide support for pupils who may be at risk and offer appropriate sources of advice and guidance.
5. To ensure that pupils and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing terrorism and radicalisation. Local values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ ideology are fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others

goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

6. Our prevent priorities will be informed by the Home Office risk assessment, (at present the top three potential risks are Islamic extremism, Animal Rights activists and Far Right extremists groups).

7. Our school will conduct a 'Prevent Duty Compliance' self-assessment and address any identified issues (every two years).

Our school, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All staff are required to complete the appropriate prevent training.

**The SPOC for The Wordsley School is Mark Wilson.
The role of the SPOC is described on page 29.**

49.1 INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. 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.

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.

Pupils 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 pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal Crisis – the pupil 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 pupil'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 pupil 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 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

49.2 PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

The SPOC is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware of who is the SPOC in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism.
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of the school in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Collating relevant information from/ in relation to referrals of vulnerable pupils into the Channel** process, attending Channel** meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed reporting progress on actions to the Channel** Co-ordinator, and sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 was published on 12th March 2015. Section 26 of the Act places a duty on schools in England (and Wales) to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/counter-terrorism-and-security-bill>

Schools leaders (including governors) must:

- Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism
- Ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with it
- Communicate and promote the importance of the duty
- Ensure staff implement the duty effectively

Duties on schools include:

- Effective partnership working with other local agencies, eg. LSCB, police, health, etc.
- Information sharing
- Maintaining appropriate records
- Assessing local risk of extremism (including Far Right extremism)
- Demonstrating they are protecting children
- Developing clear protocols for visiting speakers

- Safeguarding policies that take account of LSCB policies and procedures
- Training staff to give them knowledge and confidence
- Ensuring there are robust ICT protocols that filter out extremist materials
- School buildings must not be used to give a platform to extremists.

** Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals, who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals
- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability

50. PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS

A private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt.

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

The private foster carer becomes responsible for providing the day to day care of the child in a way which will promote and safeguard their welfare. Overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the privately fostered child remains with the parent or other person with parental responsibility. Local authorities do not formally approve or register private foster carers.

However, it is the duty of local authorities to satisfy themselves that the welfare of children who are, or will be, privately fostered within their area is being, or will be, satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted.

It is the local authority in whose area the privately fostered child resides which has legal duties in respect of that child.

There is a mandatory duty to inform local authority of children in private fostering arrangements.

All staff in our school will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any children that fall into the category of private fostering.

51. CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

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

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

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. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education

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

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school wants to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors, which increase someone's vulnerability, and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience.

With a child that has mental health issues, it is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support their well-being. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and intervention is identified and implemented. See: Mental Health & Behaviours in School (November 2018).

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, by making a referral to the DSL Team or to the Mental Health Lead – James Griffiths.

Further advice can be found via:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing>

52. ONLINE SAFETY

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying

We endeavour to ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. Our Children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and sex and relationship education (SRE).

Whilst we ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, we are mindful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding. Staff have been briefed on our Filtering and Monitoring systems.

The school utilises Smoothwall Monitoring on all computers within school used by staff and pupils, this will email the Head, DSL and Online Safety Lead (Mr Scott Wright-Evans) to alert them to any concerning activity, which will then be investigated as appropriate and referrals made where needed.

*This guidance should be read in conjunction with the school’s E-Safety Policy.

53. CYBER CRIME

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen off-line but are

enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

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

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

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

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

54. CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

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

Our schools should consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which will be compulsory from September 2020.

We know and understand our local community and the pupils we work with, keeping our eyes and ears open for any changes or anything that is potentially concerning,

perhaps in local public spaces such as parks, cafes, bars and shopping areas is contextual safeguarding.

If you are concerned about a pupil, please make a referral using My Concerns, as this will help to build up a picture of the child's environment and factors that influence their behaviour.

The following resources may help:

- DfE advice for schools: teaching online safety in schools
- [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)27 guidance](#): Education for a connected world
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: [Thinkuknow](#)
- Public Health England: [Rise Above 95](#).
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The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. (KCSiE para 202)

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. (Para 203)

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse. (para204)

Some pupils may be vulnerable due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, either because they are subject to homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic bullying or because of negative responses from parents/carers or others, which may result in increased risk of self-harm, suicide or homelessness.

Several studies also evidence that LGBT+ young people may be at increased risk of becoming victims of CSE.

55. IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW AND MONITORING

Implementation will take place by ensuring this policy is discussed at the full Governors meeting and ensuring all staff are made aware of its existence.

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis and whenever significant changes to legislation, guidance or changes to local procedures require it. The cover page of this policy states the dates of review ratification by the Governing Body.

KEY CONTACTS

Dudley Front Door 0300 555 0050

<https://childrensocialcare.dudley.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/safeguarding>

Emergency Duty Team Out of hours 0300 555 8574

Local Authority Designated Officer 01384 813061

DSCB

Gillian Ming, Safeguarding Board Manager 01384 814646

dscb@dudley.gov.uk

EARLY HELP SERVICE TEAM via Family Centres

Stourbridge Family Centre Forge Rd, Stourbridge,

DY8 1XF,

01384 818780

Halesowen Family Centre - Lye By-Pass, Stourbridge,

DY9 8HT,

01384 813954

Brierley Hill Family Centre - 18 Parkes Street, Brierley Hill,

DY5 3DY,

01384 813322

Dudley North Family Centre - Bayer Street, Bilston,

WV14 9DS,

01384 813096

Dudley Central Family Centre - Selbourne Road, Dudley

DY2 8LJ,

01384 812440

fs.stourbridge@dudley.gov.uk

fs.halesowen@dudley.gov.uk

fs.brierleyhill@dudley.gov.uk

fs.dudleynorth@dudley.gov.uk

fs.dudley@dudley.gov.uk

HEALTH

Safeguarding Team, Cross Street Health Centre 01384 366210

POLICE

Child Abuse & Investigation Unit, Brierley Hill Police Station 101 or 0345 113 5000

Haroon Akhlaq, Police Prevent Officer 07393 142188

h.akhlaq@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

EDUCATION

Funbir Jaspal – Child Protection Officer (Education) 01384 813061

funbir.jaspal@dudley.gov.uk

Alyson Sayers, Education Trainer

alyson.sayers@dudley.gov.uk

Jane Dickens Safeguarding Lead for Education (SLE) Mobile: 07973
914583

01384 816822

Jane.Dickens@dudley.gov.uk

VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Donna Roberts – Children’s Development Officer, Dudley Council Voluntary Service
01384 485458

children@dudleycvs.org.uk

EARLY YEARS

Donna Farnell, Lead for Childcare 01384 814373

donna.farnell@dudley.gov.uk

CSE

Nicki Burrows, CSE & Missing Co-ordinator 01384 814984

07976 868831

nicki.burrows@dudley.gov.uk

PREVENT

John Hodt, Black Country and Dudley Co-ordinator

01384 814736

07557 323157

john.hodt@dudley.gcsx.gov.uk

Mark Wilson

DFE Helpline

0207 3407264

counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov

SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT

Rachael McKiernon-Doyle

01384 815547

rachael.doyle@dudley.gov.uk

PRIVATE FOSTERING

01384 813149

SPURGEONS - DUDLEY YOUNG CARERS

01902 877550

TEENAGE PREGNANCY TEAM: RESPECT YOURSELF

01384 811572

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE COORDINATOR

Jain Downing

01384 816155

jain.downing@dudley.gov.uk

SWITCH (THE ZONE)

01384 241440

ARC ATLANTIC RECOVERY CENTRE

01384 426120

APPENDIX 1

DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that she/he is speaking to you.
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but she/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly, what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that she/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- Do not tell the child that what she/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what she/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again whom you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked.
Do not add any opinions or assumptions. Please only state facts.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS

You must not deal with this yourself. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher.

Complete the reporting online using My Concerns and if considered urgent, see the DSL immediately.

Children making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

APPENDIX 2

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED: CONCERNS OUTSIDE THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT (E.G. A PARENT OR CARER)

- Report your concerns to the, Designated *Safeguarding Lead* who should contact Dudley Front Door Team or the Police as soon as possible.
- If the *Designated Safeguarding Lead* or *Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead* are not available, then the Headteacher or the person currently responsible for the school should be informed. (This is to ensure there is no delay in seeking advice or making a referral).
- The Dudley Front Door Team and the *Designated Safeguarding Lead* will decide how to involve the parents/carers. Parents should not be informed if to do so would increase risk to the child'.
- Maintain confidentiality by sharing information on a **need to know** basis only.

INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL CARE OR THE POLICE ABOUT SUSPECTED ABUSE

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The reasons for your concern
- Full name and date of birth of the child
- Names and dates of birth of the child's family/household members
- Other agencies/professionals involved with the family
- The child's first language and any special needs
- The child's developmental needs, family and environmental factors and parenting capacity
- Any work you may have already undertaken with the child and family
- All incidents will be reported on a Multi –Agency Referral Form (MARF)

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS ABOUT SOMEONE WORKING WITH CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE (E.G. A TEACHING ASSISTANT)

It is not the responsibility of anyone working within The Wordsley School in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

The Wordsley School will ensure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with these procedures. They will be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person, who works with children, in connection with their employment, voluntary or personal activity, has:

- 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 they are likely to pose a risk of harm to children

These behaviours will be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). This includes concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (s16-19 *Sexual Offences Act 2003*);
- 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (s15 *Sexual Offences Act 2003*);
- Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising etc);
- Possession of sexual images of children / pseudo-photographs of children.

The definition of working with children includes paid and unpaid staff, volunteers and carers (including foster and adoptive carers). It will include everyone who works in The Wordsley School, including administrative and other support staff.

ACTION IF THERE ARE CONCERNS

Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Headteacher will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Headteacher / Chair of Governors who will decide on whether disciplinary action should be taken and the next steps to take.

CONCERNS ABOUT SUSPECTED ABUSE

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer must be reported to the Designated *Safeguarding Lead* / Headteacher, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Designated *Safeguarding Lead* / Headteacher will refer the allegation to the Dudley Front Door Team who may involve the Police. All allegations against people who work with children must be passed onto the LADO.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Dudley Front Door Team.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the concern must be shared with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is the subject of the concern / allegation, the concern must be shared with the Chair of Governors.

The Chair of Governors will liaise with the Designated Officer for Managing Allegations and HR.

INTERNAL ENQUIRIES AND SUSPENSION

- The Headteacher will liaise with the Chair of Governors and make an immediate decision. Advice can also be sought from the Human Resources Section and the LADO.
- If the Headteacher is the focus of the enquiry, LADO with the Chair of Governors will take the lead on decisions. The DSL will play no role in internal investigations.
- Irrespective of the findings of the SPA Team or Police inquiries the Headteacher / Chair of Governors will assess all individual cases to decide whether an individual can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Chair of Governors and Headteacher must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

APPENDIX 3

INFORMATION SHARING ADVICE FOR PRACTITIONERS PROVIDING SAFEGUARDING SERVICES TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CARERS JULY 2018

The seven golden rules to sharing information

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are

sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose

APPENDIX 4

Safeguarding Forms

All forms can be emailed by the safeguarding team or found online at:

<http://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/child/work-with-children-young-people/safeguarding-children-procedures/part-a/part-a-forms/>

APPENDIX 5

Thresholds Framework

The full document is available in the safeguarding office and online at:

<https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/DSPP-Support-Level-Guidance-and-Framework-March-2023.pdf>

Dudley Threshold of Need and Support Framework

