Carr Lodge Academy

Staff Safeguarding Children Handbook

CARR LODGE ACADEMY

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

NSPCC

Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children and young people is an important element of the government's every child matters change for children programme, which is based on 5 inter-dependent outcomes for children and young people.

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well being

Categories of child abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the symptoms of or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-contact acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Recognising Concerns

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. Teachers and other staff in the education service are particularly well placed to observe and should be alert to, outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.

Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition, and of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence or attention-seeking, may be noticeable. Sexual abuse may present physical signs, or lead to a substantial behavioural change including precocity or withdrawal.

Self-harm, either through substance misuse, physical self-harm, or by threats of suicide or other self-harming gestures, including serious eating disorders, may be another indicator of abuse, although there may be many reasons for such extreme behaviour.

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Any concerns about a child's welfare should be brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead within the academy and where appropriate, shared with the statutory agencies and designated professionals responsible for child protection.

Early Help - What is it in Doncaster?

Early Help is a way of thinking and working together as services with families that have additional or more complex needs. Early help can prevent problems from getting worse by providing support to families when a need is identified or as soon as a problem emerges. This can be at any point in a child's life, from conception, through childhood and into adolescence. It can also prevent further problems arising by building resilience with families to find their own solutions in the future. It should not be seen as a specific service, but any service, and crucially how services work collectively through tailored support packages for specific needs in individual families.

If you feel that any families would benefit from this support please direct them to the DSL to make the early help referral or alternatively provide them this number 01302 734110 and they can self-referral. The online form can be found on the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership website.

The stages of Early Help support Stage 1 Enquiry and assessment of needs All services in Doncaster are part of Early Help – for example schools, GPs, housing, health visitors or mental health workers. A professional from any service that works with you or your child (perhaps a teacher, nurse or health visitor), will gather some details about your family. This professional might not be the right person to provide all the right help for you, so they will share your details through an enquiry to the Early Help team. This team will find the right person to support each family. That person will become their Lead Practitioner. Each parent/carer will need to sign a consent form so their details can be shared with the Early Help team and other services that will be able to support.

What is an early help assessment?

Each family will be fully involved and will be listened to. Each family will receive their plan showing what they want to achieve and the support they need. Each family will have a family plan and their lead practitioner will support them and will explore their needs and together with begin to support with the right services to address the presenting issues. The plan will include access to the services that are needed such as a midwife; a teacher, job centre, housing officer or a family support worker. The Lead Practitioner will work alongside families and will be their main contact throughout. Child's voice will also be captured through direct work which is evidenced based using the signs of safety approach.

Specific Types of Abuse

Education staff should also be alert to signs and symptoms that may indicate more specific types of abuse.

BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally". It can happen online (cyber-bullying) and both in and out of school, and can be prejudice based or discriminatory.

Bullying can have significant effects on children's mental health, including into adulthood. Children who are bullied might also do less well at school and have fewer friends.

Some children may be more vulnerable to bullying due to perceived differences, such as:

- Having special educational needs or disabilities
- Characteristics like race, religion or sexual orientation
- Being adopted or in care
- Suffering from a health problem
- Having caring responsibilities

What to look for:

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- Truanting or seeming reluctant to attend school
- Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- Not doing as well at school
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- Nervous or secretive behaviour when online
- Problems with eating or sleeping
- Bullying others

PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Peer-on-peer abuse is abuse of any type between children. It can include:

- Bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Physical abuse (e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling, or any way of causing physical harm)
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos (also known as 'sexting')
- Sexual harassment, sexual violence
- Upskirting (taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, (e.g. forcing them to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Initiation/hazing violence and rituals

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It can happen online and offline. It can include:

- Sexual comments (e.g. telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks about clothes or appearance)
- Sexual jokes (e.g. sexualised so-called "banter"), or sexual taunting
- Physical behaviour (e.g. deliberately brushing against someone, lifting up someone's skirt, pulling someone's bra strap)
- Online sexual harassment (e.g. sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos, sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages on social media, sexual exploitation, sexual coercion and threats)

Sexual violence is any of the following (as defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003):

- Rape (sexual intercourse without consent)
- Assault by penetration (sexual penetration with a part of the body or anything else without consent)
- Sexual assault (intentional sexual touching of another person without their consent, e.g. grabbing someone's breasts or bottom)

Consent is about having the freedom and the capacity to choose.

- Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not to another, or may be given with conditions
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs
- Someone consents to sexual activity **only** if they agree by choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice
- A child under the age of 13 can **never** consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16

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Steps we take as an academy to create a safer culture;

- ✓ Make it clear to all pupils that sexual harassment and sexual violence are **not acceptable**, **will never be tolerated** and **are not an inevitable part of growing up**
- ✓ Don't tolerate or dismiss sexual harassment or sexual violence as "just banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"
- ✓ Immediately challenge sexually inappropriate behaviour whenever you see it – such as grabbing body parts, flicking bras and lifting up skirts
- ✓ Have discussions with pupils around:
    - Healthy and respectful relationships
    - What respectful behaviour looks like
    - Consent
    - Gender equality and sexism (e.g. challenging gender stereotypes)
    - Body confidence and self-esteem
    - Prejudiced behaviour
    - The fact that sexual harassment and sexual violence are always wrong

If you're involved in shaping the curriculum, make sure it tackles the issues and themes above, in an age and developmentally appropriate way.

What to do if you have a concern or an allegation is made:

- ✓ **Always** report it to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and make a written record too.
- ✓ **Always** challenge behaviour that could be sexual harassment.
- ✓ If an act of sexual violence has been reported, we'll need to involve the police as well as children's social care.

In the moment that a child makes an allegation:

DO

- ✓ Listen carefully and reassure the child that you're taking them seriously and that they'll be supported and kept safe
- ✓ Remain non-judgemental
- ✓ Make sure the child knows the next steps you will be taking
- ✓ Make it clear that this kind of behaviour is **never** acceptable, and the allegation will be taken extremely seriously
- ✓ Record the allegation straight after the conversation, but avoid taking notes while the child is talking

Don't

- ❖ Ask leading questions (anything that suggests an answer, e.g. "Did he force you?")
- ❖ Interrupt the child to clarify details
- ❖ Promise confidentiality – be clear about who you'll need to tell and why
- ❖ Record your interpretation or personal opinion on the allegation – make sure you note down only the facts as the child presents them
- ❖ Give the impression that they're creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment
- ❖ Make them feel ashamed for making a report
- ❖ Dismiss any allegation as 'just having a laugh', 'just banter', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'

Online Safety

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What is Online Safety?

It means protecting children from 4 main areas of risk:

1. **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material online (e.g. pornography, fake news, racist or offensive views, radical or extremist views, underage apps or gaming)
2. **Contact**: being the victim of harmful interactions online, whether between children or by adults (e.g. bullying, grooming, aggressive advertising, pressure to spend money)
3. **Conduct**: behaving in a way online that causes harm or increases the likelihood of it (e.g. bullying others, making, sending or receiving explicit images, sexually harassing others)
4. **Commerce:** risks like online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams

Children could also stray into cyber-crime such as hacking, 'booting' (overwhelming a computer, network or website with traffic to make it unavailable) and involvement with malicious software like viruses.

Online safety <u>is</u> part of safeguarding:

We need to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate experiences online

Peer-on-peer abuse (including bullying), sexual harassment, and extremist radicalisation can all happen online.

Signs of online safety issues to look out for:

A child might:

- Spend more time on their phone or online than usual
- Seem distant, upset or angry after using their phone or the internet
- Be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online
- Have lots of new contacts
- Show changes in their mood, behaviour or appearance, or do less well at school

If you have an online safety concern Report to the dsl and make a written record.

<u>Sharing nudes and semi nudes: Dos and Don'ts</u>

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes is the taking and/or sharing of **sexual photos and/or videos** of and by children (anyone under 18). It doesn't include the sharing of sexual imagery of children with or by adults – this is child sexual abuse.

Do:

- ✓ Talk to our DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible
- ✓ Explain to the child that you need to report it to our DSL (or deputy)
- ✓ Reassure the child that they will receive support and help

Don't:

- ❖ View, share, download or print the imagery
- ❖ If you view the imagery by accident (e.g. if a child shows it to you before you can ask them not to), report this to our DSL or deputy
- ❖ Promise confidentiality
- ❖ Say or do anything to blame or shame any of the children involved

As an academy we will continue to talk to children about the importance of:

- Knowing the minimum ages of apps and social media
- Making sure their social media accounts aren't public, wherever possible
- Telling their parents or carers what they're doing online

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- Only accepting friend requests from people, they know and trust in real life
- Telling an adult if anything online makes them feel upset or uncomfortable
- Knowing how they can report an inappropriate message or other content within an app/social media site, and how to block people (where possible)

Challenge any conversations you overhear about:

- Using apps or sites that sound inappropriate for a child's age or maturity
- Bullying or unkindness taking place online
- Talking to people online who are strangers, or being contacted by someone they don't know
- Posting or sending photos or videos of themselves or others online

Respond to cyber-bullying (also known as online bullying) as you would to any other bullying

If you're involved in shaping the curriculum, make sure your PSHE, ICT and/or computing curriculums include teaching on all of the above

We will ensure we have the appropriate IT/technical support, and ensure we have the appropriate monitoring and filtering mechanisms in place to protect children from exposure to inappropriate or harmful material online while using your systems

CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. CME are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. CME are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. If a child is absent in your class and there is a pattern, the DSL will be alerted to this and if no contact can be made with the family a home visit will be undertaken.

CHILD ABDUCTION

It is an offence for a parent or guardian to take or send their child out of the UK without appropriate consent. Child abduction may arise in situations where a child is the victim of a forced marriage or is forced into prostitution. It is more likely to arise however, when the parents of a child divorce or separate.

- When education staff become aware that parents have separated and that there are issues regarding child custody, they should seek information as to whether any conditions apply e.g. whether both parents have parental responsibility, and whether there are any legal restrictions on either partner collecting the child from school.
- Any concerns, allegations, or threats of child abduction should immediately be brought to the attention of the designated person and be subject of an urgent child protection referral.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is abusive, violent, controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour between people aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members. It can happen to **anyone**.

Increased calls to domestic abuse helplines have been reported during the coronavirus pandemic.

Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse and are related to the victim or perpetrator are victims of abuse themselves. It can seriously affect children's physical and mental wellbeing, including into adulthood, so we have a responsibility to share concerns.

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Intervening early helps to stop abuse getting worse and prevent children experiencing significant harm, so it's important to be alert to signs.

The Academy is signed up to Operation Encompass this will notify the DSL if there has been a police call out to a DA incident within the last 72 hours. The family must not be questioned about this but it enables the DSL and teacher to carry out extra check in's and be alert.

Domestic abuse can take different forms:

- **Physical**: for example, hitting, punching, pushing, biting, burning or choking
- **Psychological/emotional**: for example, putting a person down, controlling them with threats and intimidation, blaming them for the abuse or denying it
- **Sexual**: any form of sexual activity that takes place without the other person's full consent (e.g. physical contact, withholding contraception, or pressuring into sexual activities)
- **Financial**: controlling the partner's ability to earn and use their own money and resources (e.g. stopping them going to work, spending or taking their money)

Signs of witnessing domestic abuse:

- Being aggressive or bullying others, or having tantrums
- Anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- Having anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts
- Being attention seeking
- Tiredness
- Child voice, they may tell you what has happened.
- Being constantly or regularly ill, like having colds, headaches or mouth ulcers
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Eating disorders
- Having problems in school or trouble learning
- Becoming withdrawn
- Have marks where they have become involved trying to separate parents

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE (CSE)

Child criminal exploitation is a form of abuse where a child is coerced, manipulated or deceived into criminal activity. It's often linked with serious violence, such as knife or gun crime. The exploitation could be:

- In exchange for something the child needs or wants (like money)
- For the financial gain of the perpetrator(s)
- Through violence or the threat of violence, to children or their families

Criminal exploitation often also involves physical and sexual abuse, and victims can be sexually exploited too. While the activity might seem consensual, it's important to remember **these children are still victims**.

Some forms of child criminal exploitation include:

- Transporting drugs through 'county lines'
- Working in cannabis factories
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing
- Vehicle crime, such as theft of – or from – vehicles
- Committing serious violence or threatening it towards others
- Money laundering

What should I look for?

- Missing school, including single lessons
- Changes in friendships, or spending time with older individuals or groups
- Doing less well at school
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing

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- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries, and refusing to get medical help
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Using new slang words
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing or regularly coming home late
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Becoming aggressive, angry or violent

The indicators might be different for girls who are criminally exploited, and they might have different experiences to boys. But remember – **girls can be victims too**, so if something doesn't seem right with any pupil, act on it.

UPSKIRTING

'Upskirting' is a form of sexual harassment and normally involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause upset to the victim. The Department for Education sees upskirting as a form of peer-on-peer abuse so schools now have an additional requirement to include reference specifically to upskirting in their policies. "What may seem like harmless fun can have deeper consequences for both the victim and the perpetrator and everyone should be made aware of this."

GROOMING

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

CHILD TRAFFICKING

Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.

Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children and young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.

It may not be obvious that a child has been trafficked but you might notice unusual or unexpected things. They might:

- spend a lot of time doing household chores
- rarely leave their house or have no time for playing
- be orphaned or living apart from their family
- live in low-standard accommodation
- be unsure which country, city or town they're in
- can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice

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- have no access to their parents or guardians
- be seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories
- have money or things you wouldn't expect them to
- have injuries from workplace accidents
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION AND GANGS

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. The word ‘gang’ means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper ‘Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity’ distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.

- **Peer group**
  A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.
- **Street gang**
  “Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.”
- **Organised criminal gangs**
  “A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.”

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of ‘gang’ and not every ‘gang’ is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.

COUNTY LINES – What is it?

- A child is groomed by a criminal gang, then exploited to transport drugs and money from one area (county) to another – usually from an urban location to a rural or coastal one
- The child may be trafficked to the gang’s ‘trap houses’ miles away from home, to find ‘customers’, deal with rival gangs and sell drugs
- To the gang, the child is an expendable commodity. They’re likely to face violence and sexual exploitation
- The ‘line’ refers to the phone line that the gang uses for selling drugs

How do I spot it?

A child may:

- Be absent from school, sometimes only for a single lesson. They may be late or leave early
- Have multiple mobile phones, or get excessive numbers of texts or calls
- Use drugs or alcohol or be found carrying a large amount of drugs
- Be secretive – about where they’re going after school, or what they’re doing online
- Associate with other children involved in exploitation or spend time with older children and adults
- Have money, expensive clothes or items that they can’t or won’t explain, including weapons
- Be involved in serious violence (as a victim or perpetrator)
- Become angry, aggressive or violent
- Become isolated or withdrawn
- Self-harm
- Use new slang words
- Show physical signs of abuse, such as bruising or bleeding, or have infections and soreness from concealing drugs internally
- Go missing and be found away from home, or in accommodation they have no connection with
- Carry hotel cards or keys for unknown places
- Owe money to their exploiters

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- Have their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

- FGM is deliberate cutting, injury or change to female genitals, with no medical reason
- It's **illegal** in the UK, including if a girl is taken abroad for it, and is a form of child abuse
- It happens for cultural, religious and social reasons
- It's a form of honour-based abuse, where crimes are committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community
- It can cause **long-term physical problems** (e.g., constant pain, repeated infections leading to infertility, and problems with sex, labour and childbirth) and **problems with mental health**
- Girls are more at risk in the summer holidays, as this gives them time to "heal" before going back to school
- It most commonly happens between the ages of 5 and 9

Signs that a girl might be at risk of FGM:

- She comes from a family with a history of FGM or from a community known to practice FGM (there are FGM-practising communities in many parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia)
- She or her family have a limited level of integration within UK community
- Her family is not engaging with professionals or is already known to social care
- She is from an FGM-practising community and her family withdraws her from personal, social, health and economic education or relationships and sex education
- You hear references to FGM in conversation
- She confides she is going to have a special procedure or attend a special occasion to become a woman, or her friends share something similar
- She talks about a long holiday to a country where FGM is prevalent, or her parents talk about taking her out of the country for a long period
- She is unexpectedly absent from school

Signs that a girl may have undergone FGM – she:

- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem (due to embarrassment or fear)
- Confides that FGM has taken place – this could be the girl or a family member
- Has difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looks uncomfortable
- Finds it hard to sit still for long periods of time, and this wasn't a problem previously
- Has been absent from school or college repeatedly or for a prolonged period of time
- Is withdrawn or depressed, there's significant change in her behaviour, or she has other increased emotional and psychological needs
- Talks about pain or discomfort between her legs
- Spends longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Avoids PE and exercise
- Has frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Talking about something somebody did to them that they're not allowed to talk about
- Changing how they dress from tight to loose-fitting clothing

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EXTREMISM and RADICALISATION – Prevent Duty

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. Schools have a duty to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty.

Extremism is defined 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." (HM Government Prevent Strategy). Schools have a legal duty to "have due regard to prevent people from being drawn in to terrorism". This legal duty is called the 'Prevent duty'.

Radicalisation is defined: as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

It is important we all safeguard children from extremism. There have been attempts to radicalise vulnerable children to develop extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Children should be protected from messages of all violent extremism including those linked to Islamist ideologies, or Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideologies, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Keeping children safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children from other risks.

FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced marriage is recognised as a form of domestic violence and a serious abuse of human rights. It is not sanctioned within any culture or religion and it is not the same as an arranged marriage in which both spouses can choose whether or not to accept the arrangement. In forced marriage, one or both of the spouses do not consent and some element of duress is involved, including physical and emotional pressure. Education staff should be alert to potential warning signs and consider (whilst being careful not to assume) that forced marriage may be the reason. These warning signs can include:

- a sudden drop in performance
- conflicts with parents over continued or further education
- excessive parental restrictions and control
- history of domestic violence in the family
- truancy and/or extended absence through sickness or overseas commitments
- depressive behaviour including self-harming
- history of siblings leaving education early and marrying whilst young

RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS ABUSE

Racial and religious harassment can cause a child to feel emotionally abused and place them at risk of significant harm. Any concerns that a child is directly or indirectly affected, whether inside or outside the family environment, should be considered under child protection procedures.

Any complaints of bullying by another pupil or member of staff, involving racial or religious harassment, which place a child at risk of harm should similarly be considered under child protection procedures.

Mental health and wellbeing

What is Anxiety?

- All children (and adults) feel anxious sometimes – this is normal. Anxiety becomes a problem when it gets in the way of everyday life and affects a child's thoughts and behaviour daily

- A child might feel anxious about specific things, like being away from their parents or carers, or going out. Or they might feel anxious about things in general, and the future

Depression and low mood

Everyone has bad days sometimes, but if it goes on for longer, it could be a low mood. If it goes on for more than 2 weeks and starts to get in the way of day-to-day life, it could be depression.

What should I look out for in pupils?

Look for a change in mood compared to normal, which goes on for more than a few days. You might spot this through a child:

- Seeming persistently sad or angry
- Being irritable
- Losing interest in things they used to enjoy
- Being tired or not having any energy

What is self harm and why do children do it?

'Self-harm' means injuring yourself deliberately. It's most often associated with cutting, but can also involve burning, hitting or punching, substance use, or eating disorders.

A child may self-harm:

- As a coping mechanism – to feel more in control or to deal with negative or overwhelming feelings
- As a form of release – to change emotional pain into physical pain, or to relieve feelings of numbness, anger or aggression
- To punish themselves

What to look out for?

Unexplained accidents or injuries that look like they could be self-inflicted, including cuts, bruises or cigarette burns on their wrists, arms, thighs or chest

- **Covering up**, even in warm weather, and avoiding situations where they might be expected to wear more revealing clothing or take clothing off
- **Having sharp items**
- **Expressing self-loathing and a desire to hurt or punish themselves**

Other possible signs are:

- Changes in socialising, eating and sleeping patterns
- Low self-esteem, isolation, irritability and mood changes
- Not doing as well at school, Losing interest in hobbies

How to respond;

- Listen actively
- Let the child lead the conversation. Don't interrupt them
- Take the child seriously and reassure them it's not their fault
- Don't promise confidentiality. Be honest about who you'll need to tell
- Ask open questions to clarify. Don't ask leading questions
- Make a written record as soon as possible afterwards

How to talk to pupils about worries about mental health and respond;

- Find a relaxed, quiet and private space
- Show curiosity. Use phrases like "I noticed …" and "I wondered if …"
- Children might not know how to put their feelings into words so it's helpful if you label feelings

"There needs to be a whole school vigilant approach to safeguarding, with all staff taking equal responsibility for the recording and reporting of concerns."

- Allow for comfortable silences
- Show open body language and listen actively. Don't cross your arms and legs. Make eye contact, nod and use small comments like "yes" to show you're listening, and summarise what they say occasionally
- Normalise feelings, but don't minimise them. Let them know it's ok to feel upset or worried. At the same time, don't downplay their feelings
- Offer empathy, not solutions. Try to work with them to help them find solutions instead
- Be clear that you need to tell another adult if you think there's a risk to their health or safety

Good practice in safeguarding helps in the everyday running of the school…

When children are emotionally insecure, for whatever reason, their ability to learn, interact with others and behave is often impaired. This can impact on others in and beyond their class. Recognising difficulties and tackling them early increases the child's capacity to learn, their ability to maintain good behaviour and to sustain positive and healthy relationships with peers and adults. The positive consequences – lower exclusion rates, fewer referrals to alternative provision and less conflict – are clear.

Where a concern is reported to, or identified by, a member of staff, the first priority is to establish whether the child is in need of medical attention and/or protection. If urgent action is required, medical assistance should be obtained and an immediate referral made to social care and/or the police. If a child is in need of protection, staff should note that police have the power to initiate a police protection order (PPO) in cases of emergency, whilst social care can apply to a court for an emergency protection order (EPO). The law also allows staff to take all reasonable steps to offer immediate protection to a child at risk of harm e.g. from a violent or incapacitated parent.

ACTION BY PERSON INITIALLY IDENTIFYING/RECEIVING A CONCERN

Any member of staff receiving details of a concern should:

- ✓ act with tact and empathy
- ✓ listen and treat the concern seriously.
- ✓ communicate as appropriate to the age, understanding, language preference and any communication difficulties of the child/person reporting (specialist help may be needed)
- ✓ avoid leading questions
- ✓ keep an open mind
- ✓ Staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to a child can affect evidence that may used in any subsequent criminal proceedings. The person receiving the concern should not:
- ✓ interrupt the child/person reporting when he/she is recalling significant events
- ✓ make assumptions or interpretations
- ✓ make suggestions or offer alternative explanations. This could be construed as 'coaching'.
- ✓ use leading questions e.g. 'Did they do ….. to you?' Open questions should only be used e.g. 'What happened?'
- ✓ attempt to investigate any suspicion of abuse. Only sufficient information should be sought to clarify whether a concern should be referred to social care and/or police, or dealt with internally.

The person receiving a concern should:

- ✓ record in writing the information, in the child or adult's own words, including times, dates, place of incident(s), persons present and what was said
- ✓ distinguish between fact and opinion
- ✓ include observations
- ✓ sign and date the written record
- ✓ Report to the DSL immediately

Staff should be aware that they may be required to give evidence in any subsequent prosecution, and that they may have to refer to and/or produce their notes.

The child or other person reporting the concern should not be promised confidentiality, but reassured that the information will only be passed to those who 'need to know'. Any member of staff identifying or receiving details of a concern, should immediately:

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• make a written record of decisions made and action taken

INITIAL ACTION BY THE DESIGNATED PERSON

The designated person should:

- ✓ have sight of the information recorded on CPOMS and see from the person who initially identified or received the concern
- ✓ record information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and details of any potential witnesses
- ✓ not attempt to investigate the matter as inappropriate questioning could jeopardise a child protection or criminal investigation and cause distress to the child

The DSL will discuss with the Principal and decide the appropriate steps in line with the Thresholds Guidance for Doncaster.

• If it is considered that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of significant harm, or that the concern might constitute a criminal offence, the designated person should make an immediate referral to social care

• If a child is considered to be in need of help, a referral should be made to the appropriate person/organisation e.g. educational psychologist, social care

If the designated person decides that no further action is required, he/she should make a record of the reasons for this decision. The designated person should keep a record of all information collected and any subsequent decisions and action taken, including details of any persons involved in those decisions/actions.

Considerations:

- Pupils' behaviour towards, and respect for, other young people and adults, including, for example, freedom from bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability.
- Pupils' ability to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils; enables all pupils to achieve their full educational potential and make progress in their learning; and promotes their good behaviour and safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Ensures all pupils are safe.
- Manages safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and all pupils are safe, including for example, the effective identification of children in need or at risk of significant harm, including:
  - Maintaining the single central record and appropriate arrangements for child protection.
  - The rigor with which absence is followed up.
  - How well safe practices and a culture of safety are promoted though the curriculum.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility…

<u>Key Points for good practice</u>

- Senior leaders in the school are visible and accessible.
- Safeguarding is an overt priority - Designated staff time for safeguarding raises its profile throughout the school and helps in the development of strong relationships with outside agencies and families.
- Clear roles, responsibilities and systems are in place - The Principal and Senior Leadership Team promote a fundamental awareness of roles and responsibilities and safe conduct, creating and reiterating a cohesive structure and a shared vision which filters through to pupils, parents, carers and volunteers.
- There is no threshold for sharing concerns and clarity about information sharing - Any concern can be raised by any member of staff.
- Cases are reviewed and learning shared.
- All staff know how and where to record any concerns – regular training reinforces the recording systems and allows staff to voice concerns.
- All staff know who to approach if they have concerns. (Rachael, Michelle or Nichola)

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- There is easy access to the designated person(s) and the senior leadership team. The principal operates an open-door policy for concerns.
- Regular updates are given to all staff on any changes in policy and practice and any concerns relating to individual pupils (as appropriate).
- There is a shared understanding that individuals might not know all the information about a child but trust that they are told what they need to know.
- The leadership team is sensitive to the importance of managing confidentiality, recognising too that staff may be members of the local community.
- Regardless of their role, all staff communicate with each other to support the children.
- Resources, including staff time are provided to reinforce individual safeguarding roles – clear policies outline the different roles within the staff team and detail the procedures to be followed.

Listening and Support strategies to meet the individual needs of pupils…

Schools need to have systems which will pick up children's worries and enable recognition of problems which may reflect abuse or neglect. Children have spoken of the need for vigilance so that they do not always have to speak out about what is happening to them.

Listening and support in the classroom

• Times to talk – simply agreeing with the class when a teacher or teaching assistant or other member of staff is available to talk can prevent frustration at not being able to find them. It also promotes an understanding that staff want to listen.

• Worry Boxes – children can write their worries on a slip and post them – anonymously if they wish. Teachers regularly monitor the box and then speak to the children individually or use the issues raised as a stimulus for circle time sessions. Each class has a "I wish my teacher knew ….." jar so pupils can write their feelings. This will be regulary checked daily by the teacher.

• Circle time – a regular meeting with safe ground rules for the class. It can be used for many purposes: as an opportunity to discuss wider issues; to express and discuss feelings; to model and develop social skills; and to enhance class relationships.

• Circle of friends – the children can access this support with the help of a member of staff. This is a group approach where peers can support a child in their classroom or in the playground.

• Dedicated space/ quiet areas – if children experience difficulties there is a space to which they can go. Teachers can then follow up proactively to see if the child wants to talk about the issue. This can be in the classroom and/or in the playground.

Listening and support across the whole school

• School Council – a group of elected children who represent their class. They seek the views of their class on specific issues, usually during circle time, and then feed them back to senior staff during regular school council meetings. It is important this is a two way process and representatives have the opportunity to feedback to their classes.

• Nurture Groups - A nurture group is a small group of 6 to 10 children / young people based in the school and staffed by trained adults. Nurture groups offer a short term, focused, intervention strategy, which addresses barriers to learning arising from social / emotional and or behavioural difficulties, in an inclusive, supportive manner. This is done by developing social skills in group activities. To be effective, a range of techniques are used by skilled staff to help children to re-join their classes.

Children's voice…

Key Points for good practice

• Children have opportunities and choices to talk to someone and be taken seriously – such as circle time when pupils can lead the content through use of worry boxes.

• Children have opportunities to express their views and to give feedback on what worked. The use of questionnaires can range from assessing anti-bullying work; audits of relevant policies, such as those on behaviour, so children can gain ownership of these.

• Children can be involved directly in systems for listening and support to other pupils.

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• Peer Support – Problem Pals, Rainbow Rangers, Friendship Squad, Peer Mentors.

• Buddies - new pupils were given a ‘buddy’ to help them settle in or offered to pupils who are identified as vulnerable.

• “Circle of Friends” – This is an approach to enhancing the inclusion, in a mainstream setting, of any young person who is experiencing difficulties in school because of a disability, personal crisis or because of their challenging behaviour towards others.

“There needs to be a whole school vigilant approach to safeguarding, with all staff taking equal responsibility for the recording and reporting of concerns.”