



YOUNG WOMEN'S HUB

Educate. Nurture. Inspire.

Whole School child protection and safeguarding policy

March 2022

Young Women's Hub
Child protection and safeguarding policy
Updated March 2022
To be reviewed March 2023

Introduction

1. Our school procedures for safeguarding children will always be compliant with the London Child Protection Procedures produced by the London Safeguarding Children Board. Those procedures which have been adopted by the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board are available from <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>.
2. Our school procedures also follow the Operational Guidance from the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board's 'Early Help Pathways' (June 2014).
3. This policy is available to all parents/carers in either hard copy on admission or downloaded from the school website.
4. The staff of Young Women's Hub must fully recognise the responsibilities and duty placed upon them to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students at the school. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, has a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm.
5. It is **mandatory** for all staff and governors to read annually or when revised the policies listed below, the policies are uploaded on the "My Concern" website, you can sign off once you have read the named policy.
6. Young Women's Hub Child protection and Safeguarding policy
7. Part one of the **DFE September document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2021)** **DFE 2015 'Prevent Duty'** document.
8. These documents are given to staff on induction.
9. We believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe, and stimulating environment where students can learn. A school which promotes the social, physical, and emotional wellbeing of each individual student.
10. The school recognises its responsibilities and duties to report child protection concerns to the Local Authority's Designated Officer, Social Services Department and to assist Social Services in child protection enquiries and in supporting Children in Need
11. The school will raise child protection concerns with parents/ carers at the earliest appropriate opportunity (unless it is deemed that this would place the student at risk of significant harm).
12. The school will ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend appropriate training in child protection and safeguarding issues every year to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to keep students safe. All staff training will be recorded.

13. At the Young Women’s Hub, we explicitly teach pupils about safeguarding themselves in and outside of school, including online, through a broad and balanced curriculum. We establish and maintain a culture in which children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

Safeguarding and child Protection Structure at Young Women’s Hub

Head of School	Philippa Wall
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Philippa Wall-pwall@ywh.org.uk
Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Chloe Scott-Cscott@ywh.org.uk
Designated Governor for Child Protection	Emma Quartey-Equartey@ywh.org.uk
Review Cycle	Annual
Governing body ratification	6 th September 2021
Date shared with staff	6 th September 2021
Review Date	6 th September 2022
Legal Framework	Children Act 1989 (as amended 2004 Section 52) Children Act 2004 Children Schools and Families Act 2010 Education Act 2002 s175/s157 The Teachers Standards’ 2012 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (section 26 The Prevent Duty)
Statutory Guidance	Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) Children who run away or go missing from home/care (Jan 2014)
Department of Education and Local Advice and Guidance	What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (March 2015) Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners Providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers (July 2018)
Related Policies	Anti-Bullying, Staff conduct, Behaviour Policy
Local Authority Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Point of Access Local Safeguarding Partner Arrangement’s 0208 314 6660

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nicky Pace - Independent Chair• LewishamLADO@lewisham.gov.uk |
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Child protection statement

The Young Women's Hub recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where young women are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect including child sexual exploitation, peer on peer violence, bullying and follow our procedures to ensure that the young women receive effective support, protection, and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of Lewisham safeguarding board (LSCB).

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion, or sexual identity
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Pupil's and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- Safer students make successful learners
- Representatives of the whole-school community of students, parents, staff, and governors will be involved in policy development and review
- Policies will be reviewed annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information and training to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.
- To ensure whole school are consistent with demonstrating good practice regarding child protection.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment regarding child protection for all students, parents/carers, and other stakeholders.

Terminology	
Safeguarding	Promoting the welfare of the children, refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and acting to enable children to have the best outcomes.
Child protection	Refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm
Staff	Refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time, or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity
DSL	Refers to the designated safeguarding leads at school
Child	Includes everyone under the age of 18
Parent	Refers to the birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, and adoptive parents.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act, 1989, the Education Act, 2002 and the statutory guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education, (KSCIE) 2021.

At the Young Women’s Hub, we believe that the needs of the child are paramount. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential; they have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation whatever their race, religion, first language or ethnicity, gender or sexuality, age, health, or disability, political or immigration status.

All staff accept their fundamental responsibility to keep pupils safe, promoting children’s social, physical, emotional, and moral development. All staff are trained to identify signs of abuse, and work to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm. Staff will help to equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

There are three main elements to the child protection and safeguarding policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos.

PROTECTION by following agreed procedures for identifying, monitoring, and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse; protecting children from unsuitable people.

SUPPORT to victims of abuse and to staff in identifying signs and symptoms of abuse.

Roles and responsibilities

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection is head of school

Philippa Wall

Contact details: email: pwall@ywh.org tele: 0208 698 6675

The deputy designated lead is Chloe Scott

Contact details: email: cscott@ywh.org tele: 0208 698 6675

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school.

The DSL has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, which include:

- ensuring the child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately by staff; reviewed annually; and publicly available
- advising and supporting staff on child protection and safeguarding matters
- encouraging a culture of listening to the students
- managing safeguarding referrals to children’s social care, the police, or other agencies
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the local authority where allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of LSCB training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements
- transferring the child protection file to a child’s new school
- Have received the appropriate official training, which will be undertaken every two years, and obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as Early Help Assessments.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a Child Protection Case Conference and a Child Protection Review Conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Refer all cases of suspected or alleged abuse or harm by a member of the school staff, colleague or volunteer known to work with children to the local authority children’s social care and the LA Designated Officer (LADO)
- Ensure the school’s Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, working with the governing body regarding this.
- When pupils leave the school, ensure their child protection file is copied for any new school as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.
- Ensure that safeguarding issues are regularly discussed at Governors, SLT and staff meetings.

- Promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

The deputy designated safeguarding lead(s):

- Is trained to the same level as the DSL and supports the DSL with safeguarding matters as appropriate.
- In the absence of the DSL, the deputy DSL carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students.
- In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The Governing Body at the Young Women’s Hub will ensure that:

- The school has a Safeguarding policy in place and those procedures are in accordance with statutory and Local Authority (LA) guidance.
- The Safeguarding policy is made available to parents.
- Safer recruitment procedures are used at all times, and all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with responsibility for safeguarding is a member of the senior leadership team.
- All staff have undertaken the appropriate safeguarding training.
- A nominated governor will have responsibility for liaising with the DSL, the LA and partner agencies.
- Oversee procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the LA and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually, providing information to the LA about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.
- All members of the governing body will have a current enhanced DBS check and a s128 check as per DfE guidance.

The Chair of Governors oversees appropriately anonymised LADO referral information as well as managing investigations into allegations made against the Head of School

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

Good practice includes:

- treating all students with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving students in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful, and safe behaviour among students
- being a good listener
- To be alert in changes of behaviour in students and to notice signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school’s child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues

- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, the police directly or children's social care.

Child Protection

At the Young Women's Hub, we fully recognise our responsibilities for child protection and strive to achieve an environment where children feel secure, supported, and valued within and beyond the school gate.

We recognise that some children are the victims of neglect and/or physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. Staff at school, by virtue of their day-to-day contact with and knowledge of the children in their care, are well placed to identify such abuse and to offer support to children in need.

All child protection concerns, and referrals will be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. Safeguarding, in addition to child protection, encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety, bullying/cyber-bullying, appropriate medical provision. These areas have specific policies and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this document.

What is significant harm?

The Children's Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for child safeguarding falls on everybody who is employed at the Young Women's Hub. All adults who work at the Young Women's Hub are expected to support the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, with overall responsibility falling on the Headteacher. All staff, including volunteers have a statutory obligation to report to the DSL if there is suspicion of abuse/neglect of a child or if a child discloses abuse or allegations of abuse.

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

Four categories of abuse

Child abuse is taken to refer to any child of less than 18 years who, through the actions of adults (with a caring role for that child) or their failure to act, has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm.

Abuse is broadly divided into four categories: Neglect, Physical Injury, Sexual Abuse and Emotional Abuse. Brief definitions are given below.

Children can be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, are 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse

may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or 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 causes ill health to the child. This situation is now known as fabricated or induced illness (FII); (previously Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy).

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.

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.
- 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.

This may include:

- 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.

Discriminatory Abuse is when a person is treated differently by someone because they are different to them in some way.

This can include unfair or less favourable treatment due to a person's race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality, appearance, or cultural background. Possible indicators in the child are:

- Tendency to be withdrawn
- experiencing anxiety and fearfulness
- resistance or refusal to access services required
- Low self-esteem
- Expressions of anger and/or frustration.

Institutional Abuse is the mistreatment of people brought about by poor or inadequate care or support, or systematic poor practice that affects the whole care setting. It occurs when the individual's wishes and needs are sacrificed for the benefit of a group, service, or organisation.

Indicators of this occurring are:

- Inflexible systems and routines
- Lack of consideration for dietary requirements
- Inappropriate ways of addressing

[\(Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children\)](#)

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, should be reported, and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. This can be accessed through our anti-bullying policy which can be found on the website and in the school office.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer-on-peer abuse

- An open and honest environment where students feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.

- Registrations are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- RE and RSE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs, and other suitable activities.
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable
- All allegations of peer-on-peer abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately.

They will then be investigated and dealt with as follows.

- **Information gathering** – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
- **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care. The DSL will then work with children’s social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.
- **Inform parents** - as with other concerns of abuse, the school will normally seek to discuss concerns about a student with parents. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the student so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with the guidance set out in Part 5 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)*.

Child protection referral procedures

The DSL will make a referral to children’s social care if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to Children’s social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding, or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they ‘tell’. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

It is the responsibility of all staff members, volunteers, and contractors to *report* their concerns. It is *not their responsibility to investigate* or decide whether a child has been harmed or abused.

A child who is being harmed, abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures, or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their schoolwork
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important that all staff, volunteers and/or contractors report *all* concerns even if there is no 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk. (

Key procedural points in acting are:

- We will refer any student believed to have suffered or to be likely to suffer significant harm to the Social Services Department without delay and will follow up any such referral in writing within 48 hours (**please refer to Appendix 1 for contact details**).
- We will ensure the immediate safety of any child felt to be at serious risk by taking appropriate action and by involving other relevant agencies as necessary
- We will develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at CP case conferences wherever possible and providing reports as a matter of course. We will contribute to multi-agency assessments of students needs where appropriate.
- Written records are kept of all concerns, whether there is a need to refer the matter immediately, and that these records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in locked locations.

- Social Services are notified of any student on the Child Protection Register who is absent from school without explanation for more than 1 day.
- Any new concern or relevant information about a child on the Child Protection Register will be passed to the child's allocated social worker without delay.
- If a child on the Child Protection Register leaves the school, records will be transferred to the new school without delay and the child's social worker informed of the change.
- If school staff are unsure how to proceed in a potential Child Protection situation, or require advice, this will be appropriately sought via the Local Authority's Designated Officer.

Taking action

Any child, in any family, in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

Key points for staff to remember for acting are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary, call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends, or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the student what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the **welfare concern form** and hand it to the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.
- Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

Referral to Children's social care

What is "MASH"?

The Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) provides a single point of access to the services that help keep children safe. It is a multi-agency team made up of representatives from a range of services that provide advice, support and protection as needed. These services include:

- children's social care
- Lewisham police
- health services
- child and adolescent mental health services

- early help
- housing
- probation
- substance misuse
- victim support.

MASH provides a secure environment for these services to share information and improve decision-making whenever there are concerns for a child.

Early help as part of the MASH process

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care. Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help;
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.

Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote interagency cooperation to improve the welfare of children.'

What does MASH do?

If you are concerned about a child who has additional needs that are not being met by services currently involved with the family, the MASH will respond to requests for advice and support. The MASH also responds to child protection concerns for children at risk of significant harm.

Further information is available on [requesting help from the MASH](#), and for [families whose children have been referred](#) to the MASH.

How does it work?

When the MASH receives a referral, the agencies within the team can share information they have on the family with a social worker, who will use this to decide what help the child and family need and whether the child is at risk of harm.

MASH ensures that all referrals are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner and that information is shared within a secure environment.

By sharing information as soon as possible, the team can get a better understanding of what difficulties the family may be facing. This way, we can make sure the family receives the right kind of help and support at the right time.

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Telephone: [020 8314 6660](tel:02083146660)

Opening hours: Monday–Friday 9am–5pm.

If you have concerns about the welfare of a child outside these hours, please contact the emergency duty team on 020 8314 6000 and ask to speak to the out-of-hours social worker.

If a student discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault; and sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the student know that to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the student this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the student's staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the student's mother think about it
- Make a written record as soon as possible after the event, noting:
 - a. Name of child
 - b. Date, time, and place
 - c. Who else was present
 - d. What was said / What happened / What was noticed ... speech, behaviour, mood, drawing games, or appearance
 - e. If child or parent spoke, record their words rather than the staff member's interpretation
 - f. Analysis of what you observed and why it is a cause for concern

During a conversation with the child staff should:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not overreact – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.

- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child’s mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ as a child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next, either going straight to the designated person or advising that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form [ONLINE] and hand it to the designated person.
- Seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying parents

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

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from Children’s Social Care.

Confidentiality and sharing information

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

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

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\), 2018](#) principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant, and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary

- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of GDPR, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the head teacher. GDPR principles do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. When information is shared, the reason for doing so as well as the reasons why consent may not have been sought, will be clearly documented within the child protection records.

When a child leaves the school their Child Protection files will be copied with the copies archived and stored securely for 7 years and the original securely packaged and transferred by hand to the new school. A signed document acknowledging receipt of the record will be requested from the new school/provision.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

Team Around the Family (TAF)

The Young Women's Hub follows Lewisham's multi-agency threshold guidance document which informs agencies in Lewisham on how to assess and identify a child's level of need and how to access the right level support.

The threshold guidance is divided into four levels:

- Tier 1 - No Additional Needs
- Tier 2 - Early Help/ Early Support
- Tier 3 - Children with Complex Multiple Needs
- Tier 4 - Children in Acute Need

The thresholds for intervention in Lewisham are based upon the London Continuum of Need. The London Continuum of Need provides descriptors for four levels of need. When there are children with additional needs, who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; their needs are not clear, this is the threshold for a multi-agency early help assessment to begin – Tier 2/Level 2, Early Help/Early Support.

These are children who require a lead professional for a co-ordinated approach to the provision of additional services such as family support services, parenting programmes and children's centres. These will be provided

within universal or targeted services provision and do not include services from Children's Social Care and will normally be facilitated by arranging a TAF meeting with the relevant professionals.

Parents/carers will always be contacted to discuss our concerns prior to making a decision to hold a TAF and their consent will be sought. However, if consent is not given and we maintain that there remain unmet needs of the child and there are safeguarding concerns of any nature, a TAF may still be held without the parent/carer consent.

During the TAF, an Early Help Assessment (EHA) will be made, and this will enable us to make clear decisions about any help/support that may be needed and the next steps that should be taken. As part of the TAF process, the EHA will be revisited in six-weekly cycles as a very minimum, although if the needs change, this may happen sooner. At each meeting, a decision will be made as to the current needs for the child/family and how these are best met, including making decisions whether more intervention is needed or whether the current support can be stepped down

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Referrals to Children's Social Care are only made for children with needs at Level 3 or 4 of the Continuum of Need. This is determined where children are identified as requiring specialist services in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their mental and/or physical health and development and/or who are disabled. They may require longer term intervention from specialist services. In some cases, these children's needs may be secondary to the adults needs. This is the threshold for an assessment led by children's social care under Section 17, Children Act 1989 although the assessments and services required may come from a range of provision outside of children's social care. Staff with concerns should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police, or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the DSL/Deputy DSL/ Headteacher or the Chair of Governors (for allegations against the Headteacher) are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

As advised in KCSIE 2021 the DSL (including any deputies) should liaise with the three safeguarding partners in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and [NSPCC – When to call the Police](#)

Making a MASH request

If, as a professional, staff have safeguarding concerns or are requesting additional targeted early help, they can [use the online MASH request form](#) after reading the below information.

Please note that residents and other members of the public can still make referrals in person or over the phone.

All requests that come through the MASH will be triaged by the multi-agency team and staff may be contacted by a professional representing the school to discuss the request.

Before staff make a request

- The following information will help to determine if it is necessary to make a MASH request, and which part of the MASH request form to use:
- Lewisham's Threshold Guidance will help to assess the level of support needed or risks present. **Professionals should refer to this guidance before making a MASH request. This, along with some brief guidance, can be found on the MASH webpage and the LSCP website, links below.**
- If staff believe a child and their family need some additional support this should be **discussed with the family first** and agree who is best placed to provide that support. An Early Help Assessment can help to get a full picture of the family's situation and plan how to meet that need.
- If it is believed a child or family has needs at the targeted level, which are not being met by services currently involved with the family, the form can be completed to **request help and support** from the MASH.
- If professional working with a child requires supporting information from Children's Social Care (e.g., CAFCASS, probation, housing conducting statutory safeguarding checks, assessments), the form can also be completed to **request supporting information**.
- If there is any worry that a child is at risk of significant harm through abuse or neglect, staff should call the MASH immediately on 020 8314 6660 to discuss their concerns and then use the form to **request child protection** from the MASH.

MASH / Early Help Consultation Service

To help professionals make the most informed decisions the MASH and Early Help Team will provide a professionals' advice line. This will be available for consultation from 9am – 5pm.

Where the child may need help and protection, they will be given advice and guidance about making a referral, including how to involve parents. Professionals will also receive guidance on the need for parental consent/ recorded clarification needed as to why consent was overridden.

During consultation professionals, should:

- Be clear about their concern and what is needed from the consultation
- Clearly identify what their organisation has already done about the concern and the impact of this
- Seek clarification where there are any uncertainties about what is involved
- In the case of the outcome of consultation being to make a referral, discuss the appropriateness of not seeking, or overriding parental consent.

The Consultation service aims to:

- Offer quick access via the telephone to Children's Safeguarding and Social Care advice
- Provide advice on Children's Safeguarding and Social Care threshold decision making i.e., S17 or S47 of the CA 1989
- Improve information sharing about universal and target services providing early help
- Allow professionals the opportunity to talk through situations (hypothetically if necessary) of concern to help determine an appropriate response, without the need for formal referral. This advice will be recorded to provide an audit trail.

How the Consultation Service works?

- Consultation will be offered by MASH Social worker/ Early help team and their professional partners for all professionals seeking advice about children who they are concerned about
- To undertake a consultation professionals should telephone the MASH/ Early Help team on 0208 314 6660. Professionals have the option to speak with their own service colleagues co-located in the MASH, who in turn will always be able to seek advice and guidance from social workers
- When concerns are raised about a child (ren) the MASH/ Early Help hub will record the consultation as a contact on the EHM database checking the child's details to ensure appropriate identification. An analysis of need, harm and risk issues will be carried out to provide early action, diversion or intervention to the child and his/ her family. Consent on these cases will always be recorded and considered
- Where professionals simply seek advice and or guidance on hypothetical cases, they feel stuck with, the MASH or Early help staff members who provides the consultation will send an email as a follow up action and with the advice recorded. It is expected that the contacting professional follow the record keeping and information guidelines for their own agency, to record they have held a consultation. With hypothetical queries the MASH/ Early Help team will not contact the family but do expect professionals to discuss any concerns they have with the individuals who have parental responsibility for the child
- Professionals and their agencies are not obliged to follow the advice offered, however staff within the MASH/ Early Help team will escalate concerns in line with the London Safeguarding Children Procedures where they feel safeguarding activity is required and advice is not followed
- If following consultation more information becomes known or the situation changes, a professional can seek further clarity by calling the consultation line at any time.
- Alternatively, if they feel that the response, they have received does not meet the needs of the child/family or leaves a child at risk of harm, they can still make a referral in the usual way or escalate their concerns through their organisation's safeguarding process.

Using the Local Children Safeguarding Partnership (LSCP) Thresholds for Intervention guidance

The Lewisham Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) has developed a document following consultation with partners in October 2016 and has recently been revised in January 2019, for professionals to determine the levels of need when making a judgement and assessment of the child and their family. This document provides advice and guidance regarding the level of support and intervention children and their families may require. Before making a referral to the MASH professionals should consider if the needs identified can be met within their own agency, or by other professionals already involved with the family. This is usually relevant for children who have universal or additional needs, this is often referred to as Level 1 or 2 support as demonstrated in the Thresholds Guidance.

Professionals should seek to discuss any concerns they have with the parents/carers who have parental responsibility, are caring for the child by way of private fostering arrangements (or under a statutory regulation) and inform them that they are making a referral to the MASH when new safeguarding concerns arise, or no change is affected within existing plans. This should only be done where such discussions will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm or cause any significant delay.

The Thresholds for Intervention Guidance can be accessed [here](#):

Identifying a child in need of help/ support or protection

A referral to the MASH should be made when a child or family needs support identified require Level 3 or 4 support in the Thresholds Guidance. Additional information including the link to the online request form can be found on the Lewisham MASH Webpage: www.lewisham.gov.uk/MASH

Contact:

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)Tel: 020 8314 6660

Email: mashagency@lewisham.gov.uk; mashgcsx@lewisham.gcsx.gov.uk

Opening hours: Monday–Friday 9am–5pm.

If you have concerns about the welfare of a child outside these hours, please contact the emergency duty team on 020 8314 6000 and ask to speak to the out-of-hours duty social worker

Domestic Abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

In extreme cases this could include murder.

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 a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Children and young people witnessing domestic abuse

Witnessing domestic abuse is really distressing and scary for a child and causes serious harm. Children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening are at risk of other types of abuse too. Children can experience domestic abuse or violence in lots of different ways. They might:

- see the abuse
- hear the abuse from another room
- see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards
- be hurt by being nearby or trying to stop the abuse

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- become aggressive
- display anti-social behaviour
- suffer from depression or anxiety
- not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

Where potential cases of Domestic Violence are identified, the school will conduct an assessment using the Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) Risk Indicator Checklist. If a case causes enough concern following this assessment, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), will make the necessary referral(s) on to other appropriate agencies

Teenagers experiencing domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship, and it affects young people too.

They may not realise that what's happening is abuse. Even if they do, they might not tell anyone about it because they're scared of what will happen, or ashamed about what people will think.

It's often difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Operation Encompass

At the Young Women's Hub, we are working in partnership with the Metropolitan Police and Lewisham Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic violence in their household; this scheme is called Operation Encompass.

The purpose of Operation Encompass is to safeguard and support children and young people who have been involved in or witness to a domestic abuse incident. Domestic abuse impacts on children in a number of ways. Children are at increased risk of physical injury during an incident, either by accident or because they attempt to intervene. Even when not directly injured, children are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.

Encompass has been created to address this situation. It is the implementation of key partnership working between the police and schools. The aim of sharing information with local schools is to allow 'Key Adults' the opportunity of engaging with the child and to provide access to support that allows them to remain in a safe but secure familiar environment.

In order to achieve this, the Lewisham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub will share police information of all domestic incidents where one of our pupils has been present, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSL). On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child requires, this could be silent or overt dependent on the needs and wishes of the child. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the Metropolitan Police and Lewisham MASH Encompass Protocol Data Sharing Agreement. We will record this information and store this information in accordance with the record keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

The purpose and procedures in Operation Encompass have been shared with all parents and governors, is detailed as part of the school's Safeguarding Policy, and published on our school website.

At *Young Women's Hub* our Key Adult is *Philippa Wall*

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure students are appropriately safeguarded.

Children missing in education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse, or exploitation, child criminal exploitation or mental health problems.

The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where students are repeatedly absent and/or are missing for periods of time during the school day. Staff must also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, being radicalised, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Children who are missing from school must be reported to the police as a matter of urgency.

If after the reasonable checks mentioned above and a child of compulsory school age is still deemed a child missing education, the Lewisham Children Missing Education referral form should be completed and submitted to ChildrenMissingEducation@Lewisham.gov.uk

The Children Missing Education Officer should also be contacted by telephone 020 8314 6272 and by email at ChildrenMissingEducation@lewisham.gov.uk

Misper team on email: plboroughmispers@met.pnn.police.uk

Missing Person Liaison Officer

Telephone: 020 8314 9416

Email: CSCCYPRunaways@Lewisham.gov.uk

Peer on peer abuse

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or part off 'growing up'. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse, for example girl's being sexually touched/assaulted. At this school we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer-on-peer abuse.

- An open and honest learning environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviours and stressing the effects of bullying
- RE and PHSE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs, and other suitable activities
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease with the school
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where students might be vulnerable

Supporting victims of abuse

All staff should be able to reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported. Children and young people should never be made to feel ashamed or that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment.

The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on the circumstances and the nature of abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, the support of family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or some restorative justice work.

Support may also be required for the pupil that harmed. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil and /or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

Online safety

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, and sexual predation.

We have ensured that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to manage the content available to students, particularly those which can contact our students and the personal conduct of our students online.

Sexting

There is no accepted definition of 'sexting', but most professionals agree that it refers to the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs of a person under 18 years of age, via mobiles or over the internet. The [UKCCIS advice document](#) refers to this as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded, and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with

older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

Serious Violence

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk or are involved with serious crime. These include increased absence, 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 well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

Modern Slavery & Child Trafficking

[The Modern-Day Slavery Act 2015](#) came into force in October 2015.

The Act

Part 1. Consolidates and clarifies the existing offences of slavery and human trafficking whilst increasing the maximum penalty for such offences. For offences of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour, or for offences of human trafficking any person found guilty is liable to life imprisonment.

Part 2. Provides for two new civil preventative orders, the Slavery & Trafficking Prevention Order, and the Slavery & Trafficking Risk Order. Request of a Chief Officer of Police, Immigration Officer, or NCA can prevent foreign travel, protect potential victims, and prevent further offences.

Part 3. Provides for new maritime enforcement powers in relation to ships.

Part 4. Establishes the office of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and sets out the functions of the Commissioner. To encourage good practice in investigation / victim care.

Part 5. Introduces a number of measures focussed on supporting and protecting victims, including a statutory defence for slavery or trafficking victims and special measures for witnesses in criminal proceedings. Child trafficking advocates, non-prosecution of victims compelled to commit crime, presumption of under 18 until appropriate age assessment. Public body has a duty to notify suspected victim of trafficking.

Part 6. Requires certain businesses to disclose what activity they are undertaking to eliminate slavery and trafficking from their supply chains and their own business.

Part 7. Requires the Secretary of State to publish a paper on the role of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and otherwise relates to general matters such as consequential provision and commencement.

The typology of 17 types of modern slavery offences in the UK

Labour Exploitation

Victims exploited for multiple purposes in isolated environments	Victims who are often highly vulnerable are exploited for labour in multiple ways in isolated rural locations. Victims live on offenders' property in squalid conditions, are subject to repeated abuse and are very rarely paid.
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Victims work for offenders	Victims are forced to work directly for offenders in businesses or sites that they own or control (some offenders may be gangmasters). The main method of exploitation is not paying or illegally underpaying victims.
Victims work for someone other than offenders	Victims are employed in a legitimate and often low-skilled job, with legal working conditions, by an employer unrelated to the offenders. Most or all wages are taken by offenders often through control of the victims' bank accounts.

Domestic Servitude

Exploited by partner	Victims are forced to undertake household chores for their partner and often their partner's relatives. If married, the marriage may have been arranged or forced and the servitude often occurs alongside domestic abuse and sexual exploitation.
Exploited by relatives	Victims live with and exploit for household chores and childcare by family members, usually extended family. Many victims are children.
Exploiters not related to victims	Victims live with offenders who are often strangers. Victims are forced to undertake household chores and are mostly confined to the house.

Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation – group exploitation	Children are sexually exploited by groups of offenders. This is usually for personal gratification, but sometimes the exploitation involves forced sex work in fixed or changing locations and will include characteristics of types 9 and 10. Offenders frequently transport victims to different locations to abuse them.
Child sexual exploitation – single exploiter	Similar to type 7, often involves the grooming of children and transporting them for the purposes of sexual exploitation, although the offending is carried out by one individual.

Forced sex work in fixed location	Victims are trafficked and exploited in established locations set up specifically for sex work. This can include brothels or rooms in legitimate business premises (e.g., massage parlour).
Forced sex work in changing location	Victims are forced into sex work where the location of exploitation frequently changes. Locations include streets, clients' residence, hotels, or 'pop-up' brothels in short-term rented property. Victims are frequently advertised online.
Trafficking for personal gratification	Victims are trafficked to residential sites controlled by offenders and sexually exploited for the offenders' own gratification. Some victims may be confined to the site for a long period of time.

Criminal Exploitation

Forced gang-related criminality	Victims are forced to undertake gang related criminal activities, most commonly relating to drug networks. Victims are often children who are forced by gangs to transport drugs and money to and from urban areas to suburban areas and market and coastal towns.
Forced labour in illegal activities	Victims are forced to provide labour to offenders for illegal purposes. The most common example is victims forced to cultivate cannabis in private residences.
Forced acquisitive crime	Victims are forced by offenders to carry out acquisitive crimes such as shoplifting and pickpocketing. Offenders may provide food and accommodation to victims but rarely pay them.
Forced begging	Victims are transported by offenders to locations to beg on the streets for money, which is then taken by offenders. Victims are often children vulnerable adults.
Trafficking for forced sham marriage	Traffickers transport EU national victims to the UK and sell these victims to an exploiter in a one-off transaction. Exploiters marry victims to gain

	immigration advantages and often sexually abuse them.
Financial fraud (including benefit fraud)	Victims are exploited financially; most commonly their identity documents are taken and used to claim benefits. This type often occurs alongside other types.

Possible Risk Indicators

A child cannot give consent to being exploited, even if they have agreed to being moved/believe they have consented, it is not "informed consent". Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim. **All practitioners should use professional curiosity to support your ability to identify the risk factors.**

- Physical symptoms, i.e., pregnant, STI's, sexual or physical assault, poor dental health. May show signs of physical or psychological abuse, look malnourished or unkempt, or appear withdrawn.
- Victims may rarely be able to travel on their own, seem under the control or influence of others, rarely interact, or appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work.
- Involved in criminal activity, i.e., cannabis factory, begging, pick pocketing.
- Foreign national child. Brought or moved from another country. Has false documentation, or no passport or ID.
- With an adult but unclear what the relationship is.
- Concerns about the relationship between the parent and child.
- With an adult who speaks for the child.
- Orphaned or separated from family or main carers.
- Possesses money or goods not accounted for.
- Has not been registered with a GP.
- May or may not be enrolled at a school.
- Homeless child.
- An unrelated or new child discovered at an address.
- Found in a brothel or sauna.
- May be working in catering, nail bars, caring for children, cleaning etc.
- Links to adult(s) with offending history.
- Missing child. There is a strong possibility the child will be re-trafficked within 24-48 hours of being placed in care.

Procedure in Lewisham

Child Trafficking and Slavery are Child Protection issues, and the normal procedures apply. You can make a referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub by telephone 020 8314 6660 or by email mashagency@lewisham.gov.uk or complete a [MASH Referral Form](#).

Useful Contacts

- Athena Service lewishamvawg@refuge.org.uk 0800 112 405

- NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC): 0808 800 5000 ctac@nspcc.org.uk
- UK Human Trafficking Centre: 0844 778 2406, UKHTC@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk
- Refugee Council Advice Line: 020 7346 1134
- ECPAT UK: 020 7233 9887 ecpat.org.uk
- Coram Legal Centre: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
- Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB) 020 7735 8941 cfab.uk.net
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office: 020 7008 1500
- CEOP 020 7238 2320/2307 ceop.gov.uk
- Home Office <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/toolkits/tp01.htm>

Additional Guidance

- [Working Together 2015](#)
- [Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked, Practice Guidance](#)
- [Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and Guide for Practitioners](#)
- [Care of Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children \(2014\)](#)
- [Working with Foreign Authorities \(2014\) DfE](#)

Child Sexual Exploitation

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

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity

(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or

(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.

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

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.

- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example).
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse, and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess. The indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity, and an assessment which analyses the risk factors and personal circumstances of individual children to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly, and appropriate support is given. Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. If a child feels they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply (all of which are common features in cases of child sexual exploitation) consent cannot legally be given whatever the age of the child.

Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

How does child sexual exploitation affect children?

The long-term consequences of any form of child abuse can be devastating and early identification and providing support as soon as problems emerge is critical. Child sexual exploitation damages children and like any form of abuse it can have long-lasting consequences that can impact on every part of a child's life and their future outcomes.

Child sexual exploitation has been shown to affect:

- Physical (including sexual) and mental health and well-being.
- Education and training and therefore future employment prospects.
- Family relationships.
- Friends and social relationships, current and as adults; and
- Their relationship with their own children in the future.

Child sexual exploitation is complex, and children are often reluctant to disclose experiences of exploitation due to misplaced feelings of loyalty and shame. Many may not recognise what they are experiencing as abuse or that they require support or intervention, believing they are in control or in a healthy consensual relationship

Female Genital Mutilation

What is FGM?

FGM is a form of violence against women and girls (VAWG). It comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It may be carried out at any time in a girl's life, from baby to womanhood. It can be seen as a pathway to womanhood and can also be a condition of marriage. Some communities believe that if a girl has not had it done, she is deemed unhealthy, unclean, or unworthy. Parents can have very strong beliefs, genuinely thinking they are doing the right thing for their daughter, and in communities where all females have the procedure it can seem normal, then making it very difficult for girls to challenge this tradition. **However, not every mother who has had FGM will put their daughter(s) through the same procedure. Each case should be assessed carefully and sensitively.**

It is sometimes also known as female circumcision. Other local terms are: Tahoor, Absum, Halalays, Khitan, Ibi, Sunna, Gudnii, Bondo, Kutairi. It is important to let the female refer to the term she understands it to be called. FGM is sometimes incorrectly believed to be an Islamic practice. This is not the case and the Islamic Shari'a Council, the Muslim College, and the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) have condemned the practice of FGM. The majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk.

Mandatory Reporting Duty - What are 'known cases'?

Known cases are those where either a girl informs the person that an act of FGM – however described – has been carried out on her, or where the person observes physical signs on a girl appearing to show that an act of FGM has been carried out and the person has no reason to believe that the act was, or was part of, a surgical operation within section 1(2)(a) or (b) of the FGM Act 2003. The duty applies to all regulated professionals working within health or social care, and teachers. There is mandatory requirement to report to police cases of 'visually identified' or 'verbally disclosed' cases of FGM in girls under 18. The mandatory reporting does not apply to suspected cases or where a child might be 'at risk' of FGM. The mandatory reporting is for 'known' cases only.

It is Illegal

In the UK, anyone found guilty of an FGM offence or of helping somebody commit one, faces up to 14 years in prison, a fine, or both, regardless of where in the world the FGM takes place. Anyone found guilty of failing to protect a girl from risk of FGM faces up to 7 years in prison, a fine, or both. Lewisham has secured 1 FGM Protection Order.

Recognising Signs & Symptoms of Possible FGM Cases

A girl may.

- Say an older female relative is coming specially to see her.
- Say that she is being taken "home" for a special visit to become a woman (rite of passage).
- become withdrawn following this "holiday" and/or there may be a change in her behaviour.
- Run away from home or start truanting from school.
- Have difficulty standing or sitting.

- Spend longer in the toilet than usual; because of bleeding and/or infection.
- Have frequent vaginal, urinal, or pelvic infections.
- Blood born infections, including Hepatitis B & C, and HIV.
- She may be reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
- May ask for help, but not be explicit about the problem due to fear or embarrassment
- Develop emotional and mental health problems.
- Self-harm or be showing signs of child abuse.

Long Term Health Effects

Many girls and women are not aware of the lifetime effects FGM can have on them; with difficulty in childbirth (sometimes ending in death), infertility, sexually difficulties, vaginal infections, painful periods, cysts and abscesses, and difficulty controlling her bladder. This is a procedure that cannot be reversed. FGM also involves a long-term emotional impact including, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

FGM is classified into four categories:

- **Clitoridectomy:** partial or total removal of the clitoris and, in very rare cases, only the prepuce
- **Excision:** partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora
- **Infibulation:** narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris
- **Other:** all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g., pricking, piercing, incising, scraping, and cauterizing the genital area

[Language & Image Guide](#) - Please refer to the current language and image guidance to use when talking to survivors of FGM.

The following are terms used by different nationality's to describe FGM. You will need to consider that a survivor may not recognise FGM or Cutting to describe what they have experienced.

- Egypt: Thara / Khitan / Khifad
- Ethopia: Megrez / Absum
- Eritrea: Mekhnishab
- Kenya: Kutairi / Kutairi was ichana
- Nigeria: Ibi / Ugwu / Sumna
- Sierra Leone: Sunna / Bondo / Bondo Sonde
- Somalia: Gudiniin / Halalays / Qodiin
- Sudan: Khifad / Tahoor
- CHAD: Bagtne / Gadja
- Guinea-Bissau: Fanadu di Mindjer / Fanadu di Omi
- Gambia: Niaka / Kuyango / Musolula Karoola

Procedure in Lewisham

The LSCB Partnership has endorsed a local [FGM Guidance](#) to assist you with your responsibilities.

At-Risk Cases of FGM

Situations whereby the female child is **at risk** of FGM being performed, **suspected** of being performed, or **suspected** of having been performed, normal safeguarding procedures and existing pathways would apply. You should consult with your appointed safeguarding lead, and you should report it to MASH on 020 8314 6660 and email mashagency@lewisham.gov.uk.

An FGM Protection Order offer a legal means to protect and safeguard victims and potential victims of FGM. Please see the [Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

Reporting Known Cases in Lewisham

In London the only reporting gateway for mandatory reports is via 101. You should also inform MASH and your appointed safeguarding lead of your report.

The duty applies to all regulated professionals working within health or social care, and teachers. There is mandatory requirement to report to police cases of '**visually identified**' or '**verbally disclosed**' cases of FGM in girls under 18. The mandatory reporting does not apply to suspected cases, or where another person (including the mother) discloses that FGM has taken place, or where a child might be 'at risk' of FGM. The mandatory reporting is for 'known' cases only, and this can be any girl of any nationality.

[Home Office Mandatory Reporting Procedural Guidance](#)

[Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance FGM](#)

Support is Available for Girls and Women at Risk

You can obtain a Statement Opposing Female Genital Mutilation for girls and women. It is in a variety of languages on the GOV.UK website. Girls and Women can also contact.

1. Athena VAWG Service on 0800 112 4052, email lewishamvawg@refuge.org.uk, website www.refuge.org.uk/Athena
2. African Advocacy Foundation on 020 8698 447, website <http://www.africadvocacy.org/>
3. NSPCC FGM Helpline on 0800 028 3550, email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
4. FGM Every Bodys Biz website provides advice, support, and a forum to hear the voice of the girl/woman. You can also obtain up-to-date information on FGM Health Specialists and organisations working on FGM, <http://fgm-every-bodys-biz.co.uk/>
5. If a girl or woman has been taken abroad phone the Foreign & Commonwealth Office immediately on 020 7008 1500.

Breast ironing

What is breast ironing?

Breast Ironing is practiced 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.

Why does breast ironing happen?

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, 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 physical abuse

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 does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the 'ironing' can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections, and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer.

Forced Marriage/Honour Based Abuse

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales, the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A child who is being forced into marriage is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Significant harm is defined as a situation where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, a degree of physical, sexual and / or emotional harm (through abuse or neglect), which is so harmful that there needs to be compulsory intervention by child protection agencies into the life of the child and their family.

The reasons given by parents who force their children to marry include protecting their children, building stronger families, strengthening family links, protecting family honour (e.g., promiscuity or homosexuality), retaining or acquiring wealth, appeasement etc.

Suspensions that a child may be forced into marriage may arise in a number of ways, including:

- A family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early.
- Depressive behaviour including self-harming and attempted suicide.
- Unreasonable restrictions such as being kept at home by their parents ('house arrest') or being unable to complete their education.
- A child being in conflict with their parents.
- A child always being accompanied including to school and doctors' appointments.
- A child talking about an upcoming family holiday that they are worried about, fears that they will be taken out of education and kept abroad; or
- A child directly disclosing that they are worried s/he will be forced to marry.

Information about a forced marriage may come from one of the child's peer groups, a relative or member of the child's local community, from another professional or when other family issues are addressed, such as domestic violence between parents.

Children may be married at a very young age and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a student about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England. Refusal to go through with a forced marriage has sometimes been linked to so-called 'honour killing'.

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

The forced marriage unit has published multi-agency guidelines, with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. Schools and colleges can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need further advice or information.

Contact 0207 008 0151 or email fmf@fco.gov.uk

Radicalisation and Extremism

The government defines extremism 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. Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal, or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receives training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable students to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

For more information:

[Lewisham Prevent programme](#)

Tel: 07710 387 930

Email: prevent@lewisham.gov.uk

Children in Care (looked after children)

A child who is being looked after by their local authority is known as a child in care.

They might be living:

- With foster parents
- At home with their parents under the supervision of social services
- In a residential children's home
- At another residential setting like a school or secure unit

They might have been placed in care voluntarily by parent's struggling to cope, or children's services may have intervened because a child was at risk of significant harm.

Under the children Act (1989) local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children of looked after children, including promoting their educational achievement. The children's and family act (2014) made it a requirement for all local authorities in England to appoint a virtual school head to oversee the educational achievement of all looked after children.

In England, Wales and Scotland maintained schools, including academies' and free schools must have a designated teacher for looked after children. The person taking this responsibility must be a qualified teacher. One of the duties of the designated teacher is to oversee the Childs progress which is set out in a personal Education Plan.

The most common reason for a student becoming looked after is abuse or neglect. The designated Safeguarding lead needs to be aware of:

- The legal status of each looked after child
- Contact arrangements with parents
- Care arrangements and carers' level of authority, including who has parental responsibility
- Details of the Virtual School Head and Social Care Trust

Work Experience

All work experience that is carried out by the school is overseen by Lewisham's Work Experience Team. They cover all procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise students on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)*.

Children staying with host families

The school may decide for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas students may reside with host families during school terms, and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

It is not possible for schools to obtain criminal record information from the DBS about adults abroad. Where students stay with families abroad, we will agree with partner schools a shared understanding of the arrangements in place. Staff will use their professional judgement to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are appropriate and enough to safeguard the students, which will include ensuring students understand whom to contact should an emergency occur, or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents aware of these arrangements.

The school follows the guidance in Annex E of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)* to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, head of school/principal or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject

of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Staff

Abuse of position of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual.

This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence.

The school's Staff Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

Staff/Student online relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with students. This includes Facebook, Snapchat, and other social media platforms. Staff found in breach of these rules and regulations will be subjected to a disciplinary meeting.

Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code is found in the school office, and this will enable staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the head of school. Complaints about the head of school should be reported to the chair of governors, or proprietor.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to Children's Social Care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action and prevent further harm or abuse.

Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2018)* and in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy and procedures.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Staff training

It is important that all staff receive appropriate training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern regarding a student.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting, and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff, head of school and governors will receive safeguarding training that is updated annually.

All DSL staff received designated safeguarding lead training annually.

All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

Safer recruitment

Our school complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021) and the local safeguarding partner arrangements by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications, and work history. All new members of staff are asked for two references. These must be obtained before the person starts work. The school's staff recruitment policy and procedures set out the process in full and can be found in the main school office.

At least one member of the recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All relevant staff are made aware of the disqualification from childcare legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school. This information is made aware to all new staff whilst on their induction.

The school obtains written approval from supply agencies or third-party organisations to confirm that agency staff or other individuals (who may work in the school) have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Offer of appointment

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of our pre-employment checks.

Before new staff are appointed, we will:

- Verify a candidate's identity from current photographic ID and proof of address.
- Obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.

- Check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the NCTL Teacher Service Portal (formerly known as the Employer Access Online service).
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. This is done through the council's occupational health services.
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.

Additional checks on individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK:

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff. In addition, we will make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

We will verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, we will follow the council's guidance and the advice on the GOV.UK website. We will use the DQT to provide restriction information about teachers from the European Economic Area (EEA) and these checks will be recorded for staff from these countries.

All schools have a statutory duty under the [new Home Office guidance issued on 6 April 2017](#), which states that:

“All Tier 2 (General) visa applicants who want to work in specified health, education or social care sectors must provide a criminal record certificate and so for all new appointments, schools must consider additional checks, including obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct, where staff have ever lived or worked abroad”.

The requirement is applicable to **all** *Tier 2 (General) staff from any country (excluding the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland), where an individual has lived or worked for more than 12 months+ either in total or continuously as well as within the previous 10 years.

In Lewisham local authority, all new employees who declare that they have ever lived or worked outside the UK for more than 12 months+ either in total or continuously since the age of 18 years, will be risk assessed before deciding as to whether further checks are appropriate in accordance with statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

It is not a legal requirement for existing staff who have ever lived or worked abroad for 12 months+ in total or continuously since the age of 18 years, but the governing body and senior leadership at the young Women's Hub have made the decision that we will/will not risk assess existing staff to decide whether or not we will pursue overseas criminal records checks for existing members of staff, volunteers, or governors.

Single Central Record (SCR)

We keep a SCR for the school. Generally, the information to be recorded is whether or not the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which the checks were completed and by whom:

- an identity checks.
- a barred list checks.

- an enhanced DBS checks.
- a prohibition from teaching check.
- further checks on people living or working outside the UK.
- a check of professional qualifications; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

The SCR will cover the following people:

- all staff (including supply staff) who work at the school
- all others who work in regular contact with children in the school including volunteers.
- Governors

In order to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act, we will not retain a copy of the individual's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate. However, copies of other documents used to verify the successful candidates identity, right to work and required qualifications will be kept on their personnel file.

Visiting Professionals/Agency Workers/Third Party Staff

We only use supply agencies that are able to provide full written vetting information about their staff prior to them starting work at the school.

The vetting information must contain the following:

- Photograph
- ID Evidence
- Teaching Agency Check
- DfE and Welsh Assembly Number
- Qualification Evidence
- Medical Check
- Barred List Check and Date
- Valid DBS Date
- Enhanced DBS number
- Further Disclosure Information, if necessary
- Right to work in the UK Check
- Overseas Checks/Risk Assessment
- References Check
- CV History Check
- Confirmation of Level 1 safeguarding training within the last 12 months

We ask supply agencies to email the vetting information to the School Business Manager as well as to the school receptionist

The school's receptionist checks this evidence on arrival, checking that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Any discrepancies will be reported to the Business Manager immediately and the agency staff will not be able to start their work until satisfactory checks have been concluded.

Safer recruitment records of regular agency workers are included in the school's SCR.

We provide an induction for supply staff, which includes safeguarding and a briefing on any vulnerable children they will be working with.

Regulated Activity

A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if as a result of their work they:

- will be responsible, on a regular basis, in any setting for the care or supervision of children; or
- will regularly work in a school or college at times when children are on school or college premises (where the person's work requires interaction with children, whether or not the work is paid (unless they are a supervised volunteer), or whether the person is directly employed or employed by a contractor).
- Any member of staff, volunteer or governor that will be working in regulated activity will have a barred list check carried out.

- All visiting professionals e.g., PE coaches, Music teachers, Health Professionals and LA advisors have to provide the school with their valid enhanced DBS details.

- All kitchen staff have to provide the school with their valid enhanced DBS details. It is the responsibility of the Catering Contractor to carry out the necessary checks.

- All kitchen staff's safer recruitment records are included in the school's SCR.

- All cleaning staff have to provide the school with their valid enhanced DBS details. It is the responsibility of the Cleaning Contractor to carry out the necessary checks.

- All cleaning staff's safer recruitment records are included in the school's SCR.

- All Breakfast Club and After School Club Personnel have to provide the school with their valid enhanced DBS details. It is the responsibility of the Extended School providers to carry out the necessary checks.

- All Extended School personnel's safer recruitment records are included in the school's SCR.

- It is the responsibility of the Business Manager to make sure all enhanced DBS checks are current and recorded

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with students and the supervision provided to them.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

School Governors

Governing bodies must apply for an enhanced criminal records certificate for any governor who does not already hold one. They must do this by 1 September 2016 where a governor was elected before 1 April 2016 and within 21 days of appointment or election if a governor is elected or appointed after 1 April 2016.

All new governors will be asked to declare their overseas history and where necessary, complete a risk assessment. Existing governors will also/will not be required to complete an overseas criminal history risk assessment in line with our agreed school procedures.

All governors must also undergo a s128 check to confirm any directions which may have been made against them by the Secretary of State. This check will be carried out using the NCTL Teacher Service Portal (formerly known as the Employer Access Online service).

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day. If a self-employed contractor is working at the school and will have unsupervised contact with children, the school will obtain an DBS check and/or barred list check as appropriate, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account

Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge which confirms whether identity has been shown. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations.

The head of school will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended school and off-site visits

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. 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 on behalf of our school, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our students attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection/safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Staff Conduct

Training

Staff will be supported to recognise the signs and symptoms of neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. New/temporary staff will receive training as part of their induction process. Every member of staff will receive a copy of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as the Staff Code of Conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) – Part One and Annex A and will need to sign to confirm that they have read and understood the documents.

All staff will receive child protection training annually with a particular focus on recognising signs of abuse, managing a disclosure as well as recapping monitoring and reporting procedures of abuse and suspected abuse. In addition, staff will receive regular training updates about safeguarding related issues.

The safeguarding training of third-party staff/contractors will be verified and if necessary, further training may be given as part of the induction process. Third party colleagues will also sign the Staff Code of Conduct. Should a child or a member of staff be concerned about another member of staff's conduct in relation to child protection then procedures are in place. All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. They should strictly adhere to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidelines on teachers' behaviour and the school's policies.

Safer Working Practice

We make use of the Safer Recruitment Consortium document '[Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings.](#)' May 2019 as the basis for our Code of Conduct. All staff are expected to follow the young Women's Hub Staff Code of Conduct and the expectations set out in the staff handbook (see Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook).

Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for adults working with individual children to do so in view of other adults. If staff anticipate being in a situation that could be open to misinterpretation, they should alert a senior manager in advance and inform the child's parent or carer. Staff should escort children of the same sex to the toilet but are not expected to be involved with toileting, unless the child has an additional need that has been brought to their attention by the parent/guardian and a strategy agreed in writing. We recognise that physical touch between adults and children in relation to the activity being provided is acceptable in public places.

Managing Allegations Against Staff

We understand that a parent/pupil/another staff member may make an allegation against a member of staff (including volunteers and supply staff). If such an allegation is made:

- The member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher or the most senior DSL who must be part of the senior Leadership team if the Headteacher is not present.
- The Headteacher or the senior teacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as above, without notifying the Headteacher first.
- The school will follow the Lewisham Local Authority procedures in the LADO protocol, updated in May 2018, for managing allegations against staff, and statutory guidance 'Keeping Children safe in Education.' (2020)
- Individuals who are the subject of allegations should be informed of these as soon as possible, as should the parents and carers of any children involved. However, every effort must be taken to maintain confidentiality, in order to comply with the reporting restrictions in the Education Act 2011.

- Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult the LADO for Child Protection, or the School's Personnel Officer.
- The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be given to the Department for Education Misconduct Team, with the advice and support of Education Personnel and in accordance with the Barring Regulations.
- Any child making such an allegation will be treated sensitively and made to feel safe and listened to. If there are any immediate concerns of safety action must be taken to remove the child from harm. Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues in relation to children. If necessary, they should speak to the Designated Child Protection Governor (Chair of Governors) or the LA Designated Child Protection Officer (LADO) via the DSL, if they are not the same person – see Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the Home Office, the number is 0808 800 5000.

General Safeguarding

Health and Safety

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Attendance

Our policy on attendance is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. The young Women's Hub recognises that poor attendance can be an indicator that a child is experiencing abuse. The attendance officer Chloe Scott and senior leadership team monitor attendance weekly.

E-Safety and Digital Safeguarding

(See separate policy – E-Safety and Use of Mobile Phones Policy)

We ensure pupils at the Young Women's Hub are protected while using digital technologies at the school. The school is committed to including digital technologies, in particular, internet use, in our curriculum. In so doing we recognise the inherent risks posed by this useful learning tool. Full compliance with the school Digital Safeguarding policy will mitigate these risks and help to ensure pupils are safe online.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Our policies on anti-bullying and cyber-bullying are set out in separate documents and are reviewed annually by the governing body. We expect staff to acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying, constitutes a lack of duty of care, which may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Both policies are written in line with advice and statutory guidelines set out in the DfE guidance *Preventing Bullying*, in July 2017 and *Approaches to Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, June 2018.

Physical Intervention Policy

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury to themselves, another person or property. Individual Risk Assessments are completed for particular pupils who have a higher likelihood of needing physical intervention and/or restraint and staff who work closely with these students are provided with additional Positive Handling training.

School Visits

We have clear protocols in place to ensure the safety of children whilst on school trips (see visits and trips policy). These include:

- Visit procedures to be documented by staff and agreed with the Educational Visits Coordinator (all members of SLT will complete EVC training with Wide Horizons or other regulated provider of EVC training).
- A briefing for parents going on the trips including detailed information about complying with safeguarding responsibilities and what to do if a child discloses to them
- Defined roles and responsibilities for school staff
- Risk assessments
- DBS/barred list checks for parents/carers where appropriate

Children in Care (looked after children)

A child who is being looked after by their local authority is known as a child in care.

They might be living:

- With foster parents
- At home with their parents under the supervision of social services
- In a residential children's home
- At another residential setting like a school or secure unit

They might have been placed in care voluntarily by parent's struggling to cope, or children's services may have intervened because a child was at risk of significant harm.

Under the children Act (1989) local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children of looked after children, including promoting their educational achievement. The children's and family act (2014) made it a requirement for all local authorities in England to appoint a virtual school head to oversee the educational achievement of all looked after children.

In England, Wales and Scotland maintained schools, including academies' and free schools must have a designated teacher for looked after children. The person taking this responsibility must be a qualified teacher. One of the duties of the designated teacher is to oversee the Childs progress which is set out in a personal Education Plan.

The most common reason for a student becoming looked after is abuse or neglect. The designated

Safeguarding lead needs to be aware of:

- The legal status of each looked after child
- Contact arrangements with parents
- Care arrangements and carers' level of authority, including who has parental responsibility
- Details of the Virtual School Head and Social Care Trust

Children Missing 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 going missing 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 the future.

the Young Women's Hub places a great emphasis on regular and punctual attendance, and we promptly follow up any unexplained absence. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. The Young Women's Hub has both an admission register, and attendance register as required by law. All pupils are placed on both registers. the young Women's Hub informs and seeks guidance from the Local Authority before any child is deleted from the admission register. No child is deleted unless there are appropriate checks conducted to ensure that the child is not at risk from being missing from education. A child may be deleted from the admission register for the following reasons.

- The child has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system e.g., home education.
- The child ceased to attend the school and no longer lives within reasonable distance from the school at which they are registered.
- The child has been certified by the education medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent

has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the Headteacher does not reasonably believe that they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded. The Local Authority must be notified when the school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty so that Local Authorities can, as part of their duty to identify 8 regulation 4 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 9 Regulation 12(3) of the Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 14 children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The Young Women's Hub informs the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

For a variety of reasons, children with additional needs face an increased risk of abuse and neglect, therefore adults are expected to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. Indications of abuse will be reported as for other pupils.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- There may be 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
- Difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers
- At the young Women's Hub, we identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by:

Fabricated Induced Illness

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.

FII is also known as 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy' (not to be confused with [Munchausen's syndrome](#), where a person pretends to be ill or causes illness or injury to themselves).

FII covers a wide range of symptoms and behaviours involving parents seeking healthcare for a child. This ranges from extreme neglect (failing to seek medical care) to induced illness.

Behaviours in FII include a parent or other carer who:

- persuades healthcare professionals that their child is ill when they're perfectly healthy

- exaggerates or lies about their child's symptoms
- manipulates test results to suggest the presence of illness – for example, by putting glucose in urine samples to suggest the child has diabetes
- deliberately induces symptoms of illness – for example, by poisoning her child with unnecessary medication or other substances

If you suspect that a parent/carer may be fabricating or inducing illness in their child, you should not confront them directly. It's unlikely to make the person admit to wrongdoing, and it may give them the opportunity to dispose of any evidence of abuse. You must immediately report any concerns to the DSL using the concerns form.

Please see further guidance on the DfE website via the link below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277314/Safeguarding_Children_in_whom_illness_is_fabricated_or_induced.pdf

Private fostering arrangements

What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under the age of 18 if the child has a disability) lives with someone other than a close relative as part of a private arrangement (i.e., not because of a care order) for a period of 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as parents, stepparents, siblings, brothers or sisters of a parent, and grandparent (children's act 1989).

Private foster carers are responsible for the day-to-day care of the child although overarching responsibility for the child's welfare remains with the parent or person with parental responsibility.

Children living with private foster carers may be vulnerable because of the informal nature of the arrangements and because the private fosters carers may not be equipped to protect children from risks to their welfare and safety.

What schools can do to protect vulnerable children

Private foster arrangements can be difficult to identify but some questions on admission to the school could help identify children who are privately fostered.

- Is the child living with someone other than a close relative?
- Has the child been living there or is there the intention for them to be living there for 28 days or more?
- Has this been arranged and agreed by the child's parent or person with parental responsibility?
- Is the child from overseas, what are their living arrangements? Are their parents with them?

Examples of private fostering arrangements

- Adolescents estranged from their parents
- Children from overseas where parents are not resident in the country
- Children who are unable to live with their parents because of a health problem, is in prison or there are alcohol or drug issues etc.
- Children whose parents are working away from home
- Children whose parents have died or separated
- Children who have been trafficked into the country

Notifying the local authority

Both the parents and the private foster carers have a legal duty to inform the local authority if they are setting up private fostering arrangements. Local authorities have a duty to check their safety and welfare of children in private fostering arrangements.

If a child is a looked-after child, then they are not in a private fostering arrangement.

If you think a child is privately fostered discuss this with the parents or carers and encourage them to notify the local authority. If they consent, the school could contact the local authority on their behalf. If they do not consent, you could discuss your concerns with the Education Welfare Officer or contact the local authority's private fostering officer.

If you suspect a child is being harmed or is risk of harm (including from trafficking or exploitation) then follow child Protection procedures.

Separated Parents

The definition of a parent for school purposes is much wider than for any other situation. The Education Act 1996 defines a parent as:

- All natural parents, including those that are not married.
- Any person who has parental responsibility but is not a natural parent e.g., a legally appointed guardian or the Local Authority named in a Care Order.
- Any person who has care of a child i.e., a person with whom the child resides and who looks after the child irrespective of the relationship

Who has "Parental Responsibility"? (The Children Act 1989)

Having parental responsibility means assuming all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities, and authority that a parent of a child has by law. People other than a child's natural parents can acquire parental responsibility through:

- Being granted a Residence Order
- Being appointed a Guardian
- Being named in an Emergency Protection Order (although parental responsibility in a such a case is limited to taking reasonable steps to safeguard or promote the child's welfare)
- Adopting a child.

If the parents of a child were not married to each other when the child was born, the mother automatically has parental responsibility; however, the father only has parental responsibility from 1st December 2003 and by jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother. He can, however, subsequently acquire parental responsibility by various legal means. Young Women's Hub must act in accordance with the law with respect to parental responsibility, and the school's duties and processes are clearly outlined in our "Separated Parents Policy".

Photography and Images

To protect children, we will:

- Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example on our website or in newspapers and/or publications)
- Only use the school's equipment
- Only take photos and videos of children to celebrate achievement
- Use only the child's first name with an image
- Ensure that the children are appropriately dressed
- Encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them

Parents that are taking photographs at school productions are instructed that these are to be for personal use only and are not to be shared on social media.

Commissioned Extended School Provision and Lettings

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any other services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. **(Chapter 2 - Working Together 2018)**

In relation to extended school provision and lettings, these include:-

- A clear line of accountability for the commissioning and /or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- A designated professional lead for safeguarding
- Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children

- Clear policies, in line with those from the LSCP for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.

Employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.’ Working Together 2018. Where any extended service is directly commissioned by Lewisham Council, they will be responsible for the safeguard
Where extended school provision is offered directly under the supervision or management of school staff, for example an after-school sports club led by a member of school staff, the school’s safeguarding arrangements will apply.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body should seek assurance that the body concerned has **appropriate policies and procedures in place** in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

Schools and colleges should have arrangements in place with extended school providers and contractors to make sure that anyone who will be coming onto school site and working with children has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check and safer recruitment processes.

Drop-off and Collection Procedures

The school procedures covering the collection of pupils at the end of school are to ensure children are safe and in the care of the parent or an authorised adult by 3.00pm. The school must have the full contact details of parents/carers and other adults [such as grandparents] authorised by the parent/carer to collect their child. It is the parent/carer’s responsibility to ensure contact details are up to date and that they have sufficient authorised adults for a range of emergencies.

The responsibility is on parents/carers to complete these arrangements every day, including the responsibility to make their own arrangements with their named authorised adult to collect their child/children if they are going to be late for any reason.

In the event of an emergency the school expects the parent/carer to make appropriate arrangements, so the child/children are collected by 3.00pm by an authorised adult. It should be a rare occasion when there is a need to call the school to inform them that a child/children will be collected late.

Mental Health/Self-Harm

Mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people. They include depression, anxiety and conduct disorder, including self-harm, and are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives.

At as a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to be aware that mental health

problems can in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation keep students safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The [MindEd learning portal](#) provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Recent research also indicates that up to one in ten young people in the UK engage in self-harming behaviours, and that this figure is higher amongst specific populations, including young people with special educational needs. School staff can play an important role in preventing self-harm and also in supporting students, peers and parents of students currently engaging in self-harm.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood.

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing difficulties that may lead to thoughts of self-harm or suicide. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should seek further advice from the DSL.

Faith Based Abuse

Faith abuse is abuse of a child, linked to faith or belief. It is not about challenging people's beliefs, but where these beliefs lead to abuse, this should never be tolerated. This includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and Dakin (in the Hindu context); ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune, such as telephoning a wrong number which is believed by some to allow malevolent spirits to enter the home.

In the Young Women's Hub, we have provided all staff, as part of our safeguarding training, information about potential signs and indicators of faith-based abuse.

In working to identify such child [abuse](#) it is important to remember every child is different. Some children may display a combination of indicators of [abuse](#) whilst others will attempt to conceal them. In addition to the factors above, there are a range of common features across identified cases. These indicators of [abuse](#), which may also be common features in other kinds of [abuse](#), include:

- a child's body showing signs or marks, such as bruises or burns, from [physical abuse](#)
- a child becoming noticeably confused, withdrawn, disorientated or isolated and appearing alone amongst other children.

- a child's personal care deteriorating, for example through a loss of weight, being hungry, turning up to school without food or lunch money, or being unkempt with dirty clothes and even faeces smeared on to them.
- it may be directly evident that the child's parent or carer does not show concern for or have a close bond with the child.
- a child's attendance at school becoming irregular or the child being taken out of school altogether without another school place having been organised, or a deterioration in a child's performance at school.
- a child reporting that they are or have been accused of being 'evil', and/or that they are having the 'devil beaten out of them'.
-

All staff should be alert to the indicators above and should be able to identify children at risk of this type of [abuse](#) and intervene to prevent it.

Following the potential identification, confirmation, or disclosure of faith abuse by a child/young person/family member to an adult in school, the following actions will be considered:

- **Standard child safeguarding procedures apply and must always be followed** in all cases where abuse or neglect is suspected including those that may be related to particular belief systems
- A MASH referral may be necessary in order to safeguard the child/young person (see below for contact details)
- An Early Help Assessment may be appropriate for some children and young people in order to meet need

Exclusions

Decisions to exclude a child are not taken lightly and the final decision will always be made by the Headteacher. In line with the recent DfE statutory guidance, 'Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England', September 2017, when the school is considering excluding, either fixed term or permanently, a vulnerable pupil and / or a pupil/student who is the subject of a child protection plan or where there is an existing child protection file, we will call a multi-agency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude. In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, the risk assessment *must* be completed prior to convening a meeting of the Governing Body.

Searching Screening and Confiscation

The DfE advisory guidance, Searching, screening and confiscation guidance for Headteachers, school staff and governing bodies' sets out the power schools have when searched pupils, both with or without consent, and their right to confiscate items found during the searches.

At the Young Women's Hub there are occasions it may be necessary to conduct searches more randomly. Any such searches/screening will always be done in accordance with advisory guidance and full details of our school's approach are detailed in our Behavior policy.

Contextual Safeguarding

Schools have been identified as sites in which young people can experience and/or be safeguarded from abuse and violence. From experiences of sexual harassment and sexual violence through to physical assaults, relationship-based abuse, bullying and grooming into exploitative networks, young people have told practitioners, researchers, and journalists about risks they have faced in educational settings.

As such it is critical that when young people experience abuse and violence, and this is in some way associated to their school environment or school relationships – that the school itself features within the process of assessment and intervention. If we want to address the factors that cause abuse, or provide an opportunity for abuse to occur, then these factors need to be identified explored and addressed – and school assessments is one way to achieve this.

School assessments uncover risks and strengths within school contexts, that are associated to young people's experiences of abuse.

A school assessment draws on aspects of the environment to build a picture of how the school can be safer for young people.

A range of methods will be used to gather this information including:

- Speaking to young people
- Student and parent surveys
- Speaking with staff
- Reviewing behavior logs
- Observing the school environment

At the Young Women's Hub, we take contextual safeguarding very seriously. If colleagues have concerns or become aware of circumstances within school where young people are currently experiencing or are at risk of harm, please report to the DSL using the concerns form. A decision will then be made by the Senior Leadership Team about the potential need to carry out a school assessment.

Signed

Philippa Wall-Head of School/Safeguarding Lead

Emma Moore-Chair

TAKING ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL

Staff member has concerns about a child's health, development, safety, or welfare

Discusses with Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible (and certainly within 24 hours)

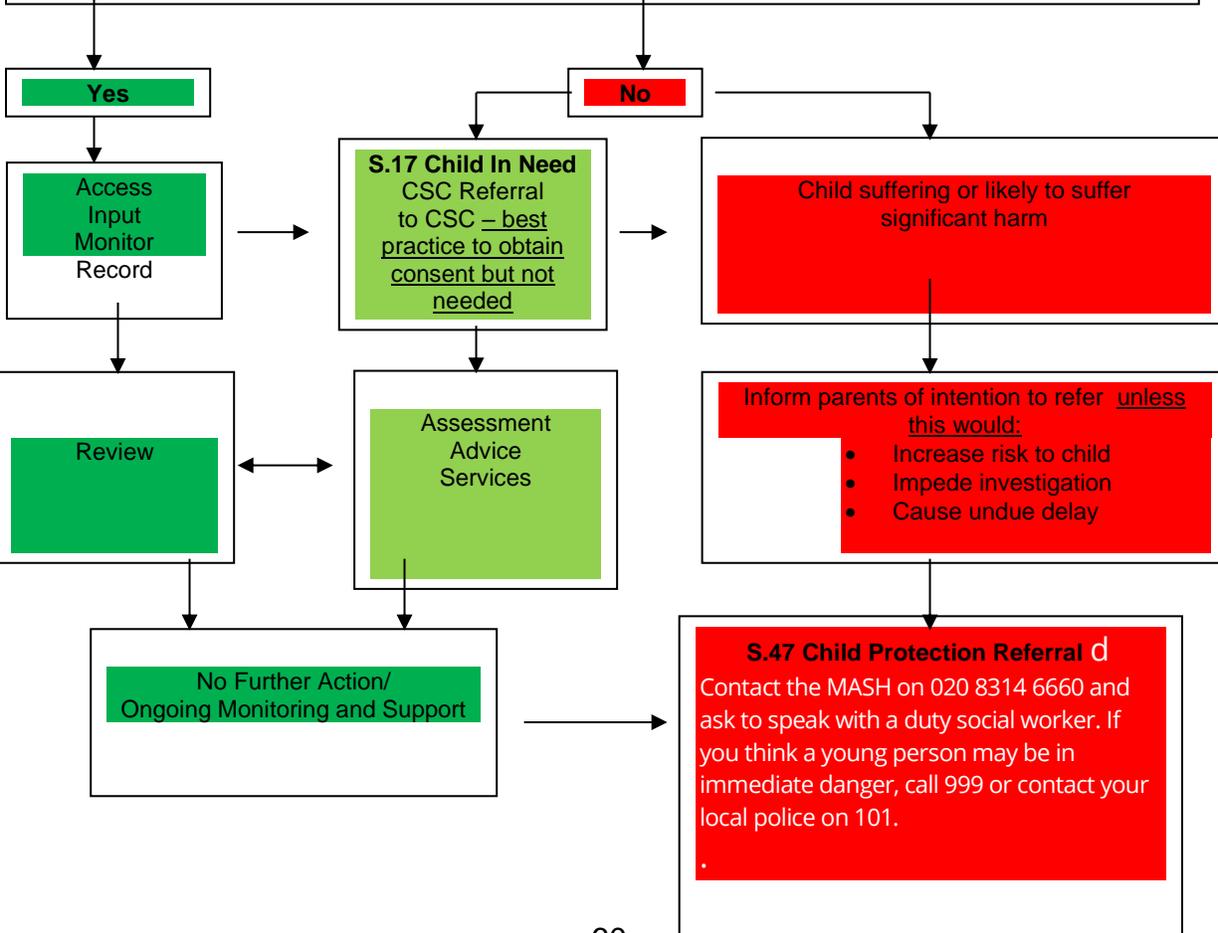
Action agreed and recorded by DSL

Designated Safeguarding Lead considers

- Context & history/information available/inaccessible
- Explanations & contemporaneous life events
- Uses Framework for Assessment & CAF
- Evidence and nature of risk/need
- Balance of Probabilities

A Level of Need Is Identified

- What level of need is identified?
- What are the parent's/child's views?
- What services might be accessed:
 - a) in school; b) via the LA; c) via direct referral to non-statutory agencies
- Can these meet the level of need identified?



Signed - Head of School

P. Wolf.

Signed - Chair

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