



ST JOHN'S SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Approved by: SJS LAB

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ST JOHN'S SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mel Poulton (Family Support Lead Professional)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:	Emily Sidhu (Assistant Headteacher) Antonia Drysdale (Head of School)
Nominated Governor:	Laura Sherwood-King (Local Advisory Board)
Executive Principal:	Terry Ashmore

Policy Statement and Principles

This policy reflects our active and rigorous approach to promoting and safeguarding the

welfare of all pupils at St John's Special School and College. We believe that children and

young adults have a fundamental right to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse.

We recognise that statistically children and young adults with special educational needs are particularly vulnerable to abuse, for example, due to barriers to communication, increased contact with adults in a caring role, or misinterpreted behaviours.

This policy is available on the school website and is included in the school handbook of Information.

Child Protection Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe, secure, caring and highly skilled environment where all pupils are respected and valued, and a curriculum which nurtures self-esteem and empowers pupils to protect themselves. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that pupils 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 the local safeguarding children board (LSCB).

Policy Principles

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all pupils, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- all staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that

- may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review
- effective safeguarding procedures are in place, made known to and understood by governors, staff, volunteers and families

Policy Aims

- to provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- to ensure consistent good practice in Safeguarding
- to demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of 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 taking action to enable all 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 lead at the school

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with regular updates
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has a working knowledge of LSCB procedures
- makes staff aware of the latest policies on safeguarding
- keeps detailed records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate

- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is

passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained

- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSCB
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually, liaises with the nominated governor, Head of School and Executive Principal as appropriate
- makes the Child Protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- liaises with the school Transition Manager and FE Department Leader to ensure effective transfers to Adult Services
- carries out appropriate checks before taking a pupil off roll, for example ensuring that there is contact with a new local authority, contacting social services if there are any concerns and maintaining contact with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- develops, monitors and supports all school pupil welfare related policies, procedures and practice
- ensures that there is a sign in every room reminding staff that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and listing who they have to immediately report concerns to
- ensures that staff complete their concern on MY CONCERN when a concern is reported
- ensures referrals made to Social Care are followed up after 48 hours if no response heard
- maintains a chronology in each pupil's electronic individual safeguarding file, including saving relevant emails
- meets fortnightly with school nurse/s
- ensures attendance at all meetings with social care (if DSL or Deputy unable to attend, class teacher or a member of SLG to attend instead)
- holds half-termly meetings with Designated Safeguarding Governor
- considers when the Mental Capacity Act needs to be referred to when decisions are to be made regarding our pupils over the age of 16

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Are trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

Good Practice Guidelines and Staff Code of Conduct

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging pupils to communicate with trusted staff in the confidence that they will be listened to
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour, appearance and to 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 handbook and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care
- providing curricular opportunities for CPSHE (Citizenship, Personal, Social & Health Education) and RSE (Relationships & Sex Education) which equip pupils with the knowledge, skill and behaviour required to stay safe, including, where appropriate knowledge and understanding of e safety.

Abuse of Position of Trust

All school staff are aware through training and the Staff Handbook that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils 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 pupil under 18 will be a criminal offence.

The school's policies on Physical Touch and Intimate Care set out the expectations of staff.

Children Who May be Particularly Vulnerable

Some pupils may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to pupils who:

- are disabled or have special educational needs
- are young carers
- are affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- are asylum seekers
- are living away from home
- are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- are living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- are living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- are vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- are at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- are at risk of forced marriage

- are at risk of being drawn into extremism

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for pupils with communication needs.

Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Whistle-blowing if you Have Concerns about a Colleague

Whistle-blowing is the means by which a member of staff can raise concern about a colleague without fear of repercussion. (Refer to Confidential Reporting Policy) Within the school community at St. John's there is an ethos of trust and respect. Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil 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. It is possible for staff to discreetly approach a member of the School Leadership Group (SLG) to share misgivings or unease about the behaviour of a colleague before there is a definite cause for concern. There are staff concern forms in place to do this. This may pre-empt the need for whistle-blowing as it creates an opportunity for staff support and guidance or for other preventative measures to be taken.

Where there is a report that a member of staff or volunteer has behaved inappropriately, the Head of School will refer the case to the **Local Authority Designated Officer LADO –Sandeep Mohan, Tel: 01234 276693**) and the Chair of Governors will be informed. Where the allegation concerns the Head of School, the Chair of Governors will liaise with the LADO.

Concerns regarding the Head of School can be reported to the Chair of LAB, Laura Sherwood-King by contacting the school office by phone or email office@st-johns-school.co.uk and arranging contact.

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.

Allegations Against Staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, the set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016)* and in the school's Handbook of Information.

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 training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's Safeguarding policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL. All staff, including the DSL, Head of School and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. 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 2016) and the LSCB by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history. The school's Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures set out the process in full and can be found in the Schools' Handbook of Information.

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

All relevant staff are made aware of the disqualification and disqualification by association legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school. St John's School ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all applicants for positions in the school – paid and voluntary.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

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

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer or visitor who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

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's day.

Site Security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their son/daughter do not need to sign in. 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 Arrangements

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

Staff/pupil Online Relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils and their families. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation as advised in the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Recognising Abuse

To ensure that our pupils 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.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

The additional categories of abuse that apply to adults are:

- Financial or Material
- Self- neglect or Self Abuse

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 which can be accessed in our Anti-Bullying policy within the Handbook of information.

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 taking action:

- 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, definitely 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 via MY CONCERN electronic system
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you are Concerned about a Pupil's Welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to express themselves further.

Staff should use MY CONCERN to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following

an initial conversation/observation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

If a Pupil 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. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils 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 pupil’s mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- 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 pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the **MY CONCERN report** and send electronically to the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying Parents/Carers

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

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, 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.

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 pupil and staff involved but also to

ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Head of School 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.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

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

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Records of concern forms are stored electronically and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, 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 pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Head of School or DSL.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's policy on confidentiality and multi-agency working policy is available to parents and pupils via the handbook of Information.

Referral to Children's Social Care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (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.

Reporting Directly to Child Protection Agencies

Staff 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 designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the Head of School and the Chair of Governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child

Children with Sexually Harmful Behaviour

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. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

Sexual Exploitation of Children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

The school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

Honour-Based Violence

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

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 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 or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age and well below the age of consent in England. School staff are alerted to this within their annual Safeguarding training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

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 receive WRAP training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils 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).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

See LSCB guidance for further information (www.proceduresonline.com/bedford_scb). Please also the School's' policy on Democratic Values.

Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. See LSCB guidance for further information (www.proceduresonline.com/bedford_scb)

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

RELATED SAFEGUARDING PORTFOLIO POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies, which are set out in Appendix Two.

Looked After Children

The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)* and the School's guidance on Work Experience placements.

Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

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

- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Staff recruitment and vetting guidance
- Children who are Looked After (CLA) policy
- Information Sharing (2015)
- Promoting the health and well-being of looked after children (2015)
- The multi-agency adult safeguarding policy, practice and procedures – Bedford Borough Council (2013)

Related School Policies

- Complaints Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Guidance on working with Students and Volunteers
- Policy on Multi-Agency Working
- Promoting Positive Behaviour (particular reference to physical intervention);
- Anti-bullying
- Intimate Care

- Physical Touch
- Confidentiality Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Home/Hospital visit guidance

APPENDIX ONE

Four Categories of Abuse for Children:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which 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 induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional Abuse

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

Sexual Abuse

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.

Neglect

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

Indicators of Abuse

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 safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited 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, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- 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 school work
- 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
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

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 DSP to decide how to proceed.

Two Categories of Abuse for Adults:

Financial or Material Abuse

- theft of money or possessions
- fraud, scamming
- preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets
- employees taking a loan from a person using the service
- undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise inheritance
- denying assistance to manage/monitor financial affairs
- denying assistance to access benefits
- misuse of personal allowance in a care home
- misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home
- someone moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress
- false representation, using another person's bank account, cards or documents
- exploitation of a person's money or assets, e.g. unauthorised use of a car
- misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority
- rogue trading – e.g. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs and failure to carry out agreed repairs or poor workmanship

Self-neglect or Self-abuse

- lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
- neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings
- inability to avoid self-harm
- failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs

Indicators of Abuse

Indicators of financial or material abuse:

- missing personal possessions
- unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle
- unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts
- power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity
- failure to register an LPA after the person has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so
- the person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative
- the family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person
- Signs of financial hardship in cases where the person's financial affairs are being managed by a court appointed deputy, attorney or LPA
- recent changes in deeds or title to property
- rent arrears and eviction notices
- a lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service
- failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person
- disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g. insufficient food in the house

- unnecessary property repairs

Indicators of self-neglect or self-abuse:

- very poor personal hygiene
- unkempt appearance
- lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- malnutrition and/ or dehydration
- living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- neglecting household maintenance
- hoarding
- collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- non-compliance with health or care services
- inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury