

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS (September 2020)

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED September 2021

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

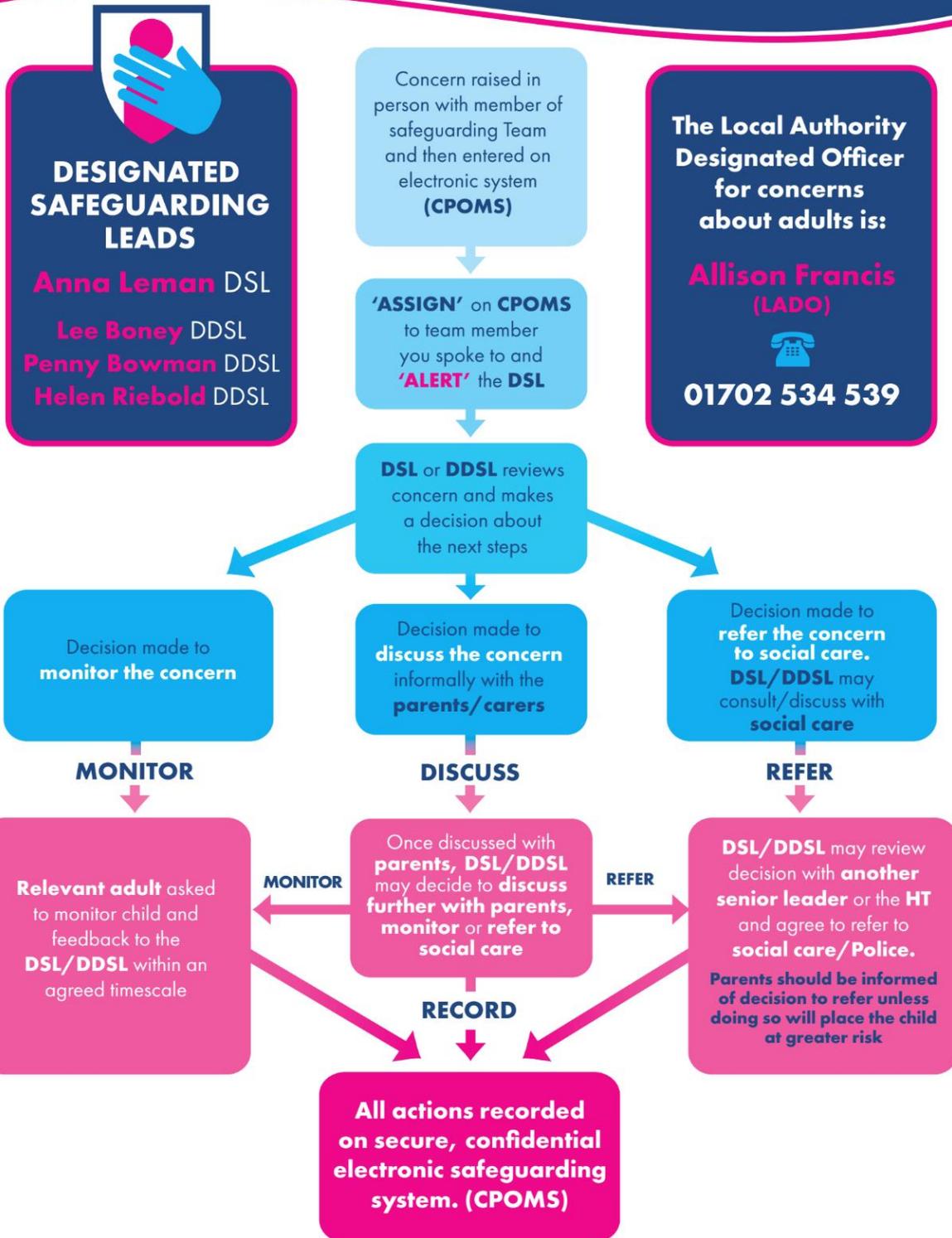
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:	Anna Leman 01702 588 852 ext 114 aleman@shsg.org
DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS:	Lee Boney 01702 588 852 ext 113 lboney@shsg.org Penny Bowman 01702 588 852 ext 111 pbowman@shsg.org Helen Riebold 01702 588 852 ext 236 hriebold@shsg.org
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:	Jane Ladner
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	Alan Bacon Alan.Bacon@btmk.co.uk

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub Children's Services, Southend Borough Council: Where schools have concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person.	01701 215007 mash@southend.gov.uk (unsecure)
OUT OF OFFICE HOURS: To make URGENT referrals	0845 606 1212
SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR and LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO):	ALLISON FRANCIS 01702 534539
SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR:	SHARON LANGSTON 01702 534591 safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk



SHSG FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



If the DSL or a member of SLT is unavailable, staff may take advice directly from social care



NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline 0800 028 0285



Education Support Helpline 08000 562 561

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1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child. (*Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE 2020*)

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is for all teachers, support staff, parents, governors, volunteers, visitors to the school site, contractors and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school. It should be read in conjunction with the Safer Recruitment Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Educational Visits Policy and E-safety Policy. It should also be read in conjunction with What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG, 2015) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) part one of which is provided to all staff including Annex A.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which includes everyone under the age of 18, is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) as:

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

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy:

Prevention by ensuring that we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who work with children, establishing and maintaining a safe and positive environment and by raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

Protection by following agreed procedures and ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.

Support to students who have/may have been abused or neglected (in line with his/her Child Protection Plan, if appropriate).

2. SCHOOL COMMITMENT

At Southend High School for Girls we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.

We will always act in the best interest of the child.

Our school aims to:

- Create a culture of vigilance where the welfare of our students is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken.
- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Ensure students receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This includes identifying emerging problems and those children who may benefit from early help.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values and to promote respect for all others.
- Facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government.
- Provide a curriculum which actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations.
- Make parents/carers aware of the school policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.
- Promote positive mental health and resilience. Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school wants to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all students and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience.

At Southend High School for Girls pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it. It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our students. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff in our school have a responsibility to protect and provide a safe learning environment in which children can learn. All staff members are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and understand their role within this process. This includes identifying any emerging problems so appropriate support may be provided and liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to report any concerns. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy), understand the difference between 'a concern' and children who are 'in immediate danger or at risk of harm' and are aware of how to make a referral to Children's Services, and/or the Police, if there is a need to do so. The names of those in our school with these specific responsibilities (the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads) are shown on the cover sheet of this document.

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place and that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually. The school publishes its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the school website alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)

The governing body ensures there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead in place.

The governing body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The governing body ensures that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.

The governing body ensures that children are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. From September 2020, our school will work in accordance with new government regulations which will make the subjects of Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory. The governing body ensures that appropriate filters and monitoring systems for online usage are in place.

The governing body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers and contractors are appropriately supervised in school. DBS (Disclosure and Barring) checks will be carried out on all staff contracted to the school including volunteers, cover supervisors, peripatetic staff and parent helpers.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead leads on safeguarding and child protection at Southend High School for Girls. The key role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school;
 - work with external agencies and professionals on matter of safety and safeguarding;
 - undertake training;
 - raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents;
- and
- ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
 - be aware of pupils who have a social worker
 - help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school leadership staff.

If, for any reason, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) will act in their absence.

The Head Teacher works in accordance with the requirements upon all school staff. In addition, the Head Teacher ensures that all safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are followed by all staff.

4. EARLY HELP

If early help is appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

5. PROCEDURES AND REPORTING CONCERNS

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance and advice:

- Southend, Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures
- The Early Help Family Support Practitioner Toolkit (Threshold Document), which can be downloaded from <http://www.southendchildren.org>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) and Disqualification under the Childcare Act, 2006 (DfE, Aug 18)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2019)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales' (HMG, April 2019)
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (HMG, Oct 18)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG, 2015)
- Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HMG, July 2018)

- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education (Safer Recruitment Consortium, April 2020)
- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#) (DfE January 2016) Advice for headteachers and school staff
- [Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies](#) (DfE, January 2018)
- [Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies](#) (DfE July 2013)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#) (DfE, July 2017)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) (DfE, May 2018)
- [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) (Home Office, 2015)
- [Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance](#) (Home Office, 2018)
- [Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities](#) (DfE, 2016)
- Teaching online safety in school (DfE, 2019)

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of our school's Child Protection Policy, advised who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy/ies) is/are and informed of their role and how to share concerns with them. On induction, staff are given a copy of the Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy, the School's Behaviour Policy and made aware of the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education. Staff are also given a copy of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2020\)](#) which includes Annex A: Further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues (for staff who work directly with children) and access to 'What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused' (HMG, March 2015), which gives helpful advice about how to respond to child protection concerns or disclosures.

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to children who may be in need of help or protection. All Staff are kept informed about safeguarding and child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and regular awareness training, as required, but at least annually.

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, suspects that abuse may have occurred, or is concerned about a child's welfare, **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) so that discussion can take place regarding whether any support for the child can be managed internally via the school's own pastoral support process, or if an early help assessment is indicated, or a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the

Police. The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s are prominently displayed in the school to ensure that all members of the school community have unfettered access to safeguarding support.

Staff report concerns by:

Sharing the concern **in person** with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or member of the safeguarding team and subsequently recording the incident on the online software application CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System). CPOMS allows staff to record information in a secure and central repository and have relevant people alerted immediately. All staff receive training in using CPOMS.

Wherever possible, the school will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Children's Social Care and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers. If the child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher. If, for any reason, nobody is available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Any individual may refer to Social Care/Police where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child. The school may seek advice from Social Care about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Deputies, will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Children's Social Care, ensuring they contact the correct Local Authority for the child.

A telephone referral to Children's Social Care must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours.

The Early Help Family Support Assessment (EHFSA) should be used to support a child protection referral. (The EHFSA form and guidance is available on www.southendchildrenspartnership.org.uk and on the Southend Safeguarding (Child) Partnership (SS(C)P) website and Southend Learning Network for children being referred who live in Southend. The Safeguarding Lead has the relevant information for referrals to other Local Authorities. A completed EHFSA form contains all the information required for a child protection referral and should be sent to MASH+. In cases where there have been mounting concerns about a child, it is likely that an EHFSA will already have been completed prior to a child protection referral. A telephone referral to MASH+ – in cases where there are immediate safeguarding concerns - should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours, using the EHFSA form to provide the information required. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure, plus any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.

Whilst all staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) with regard to any concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher has a statutory duty to report this personally to the Police. See 12.12, below, and Annex A Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) for more details.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed, or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will press for re-consideration of the case to ensure that the child's situation improves.

Parents and Carers are informed about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures on admission and on the school website.

6. TRAINING

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) will undergo updated Child Protection training specifically for Designated Safeguarding Leads at least every two years, in accordance with Keeping children safe in education (*DfE, September 2020*). In addition to formal training, staff are also given a copy of Part One of 'Keeping children safe in education: Information for all school and college staff' (DfE, September 2020), which includes Annex A: Further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues (for staff who work directly with children).

As part of induction we ensure that all staff have read:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) Part One and Annex A
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings. (Safer Recruitment Consortium April 2020).

At SHSG Induction Training is mandatory and includes:

- the child protection policy;
- the behaviour policy;
- the staff code of conduct
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

All other staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Compulsory twilight sessions form part of the Professional Development Calendar.

The school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) also undertake training in inter-agency working and other matters, as appropriate.

Staff are also made familiar with 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (DfE 2015) as it contains excellent examples of the different types of safeguarding issues.

All staff are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the Staff Code of Conduct.

7. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student, nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret as, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the Designated Lead (or Deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held treated confidentially.

8. RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent. The school follows guidance set out in 'Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services' (DfE, 2018).

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020), paragraph 85 states: 'The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.'

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will notify a member of the safeguarding team and then record it as soon as possible (once having spoken to the DSL in person) using CPOMS, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will include the action taken. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy), will decide on appropriate action and record this in CPOMS accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are uploaded to CPOMS and hard copies kept in an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the student file). All child

protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

Where a student transfers from our school to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's designated safeguarding lead.

Where a student joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment.

9. INTERAGENCY WORKING

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference called for children on the school roll. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). Whoever attends will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the school is part of the core group, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the designated safeguarding lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

10. PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND RESILIENCE IN SCHOOL

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

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our students. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

It is essential that an understanding of children's psychological development, wellbeing, resilience and mental health is embedded into Continued Professional Development. This is necessary to ensure that all teachers have the basic knowledge and skills to be able to promote the wellbeing of students and to respond effectively to mental health concerns.

Students learn about the ways to keep themselves mentally healthy in our PSHCEE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education) programme.

11. SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

SHSG is committed to ensuring that our students receive the right help at the right time. Staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating.

SHSG may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered, harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer-on-peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures.

Our school will endeavour to support all students through:

- The curriculum; to encourage our students to stay safe and to develop healthy relationships, self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
- A consistent approach from all staff which will endeavour to ensure that our pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that s/he is valued.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop open, honest and supportive relationships with parents, always with the child's best interest as paramount.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- Recognition that children with behavioural difficulties and special educational needs and/or disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Therefore, staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that, in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children are vulnerable and may be in need of support or protection.

12. VISITOR PROCEDURES

All visitors to the school (including contractors) must only enter and leave the school via the main reception area. Southend High School for Girls operates a colour coded lanyard safeguarding system for all adults on site.

BLACK lanyards are worn by all staff.

YELLOW lanyards are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked visitors.

RED lanyards are for visitors who have not been DBS checked and cannot be left unaccompanied with children or at any time whilst they are on school premises.

Peripatetic music staff, cover supervisors, invigilators and those working directly with students (those who will be left unaccompanied) will have had to complete all the necessary safeguarding checks and be recorded on the school's Single Central Record. These visitors will be issued with a black 'STAFF' lanyard.

If the visitor presents their DBS certificate on arrival, reception staff will check the certificate and record the visitor name and certificate number in the confidential log book behind reception. The DBS certificate must only be photocopied with the visitor's permission.

Visitors must present their DBS certificate or will have had their DBS checked in advance in order to walk around the school site unsupervised.

For most regular visitors (counsellors/social workers/school nurse/contractors) DBS details have been provided to SHSG and checked in advance. Reception staff will check the list at reception and/or with the HR Manager, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Learning Manager/member of staff who has arranged for the person to visit the school. They will confirm if this a regular visitor and that their details are held on school records. These visitors will be issued with a YELLOW lanyard and may be on site unaccompanied.

Posters around school inform staff and students to be vigilant and report any unsupervised visitor wearing a red lanyard to a member of the safeguarding team.

13. ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct.

The school has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children) Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the Head Teacher without delay (or where that is not possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead). Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported direct to the Chair of Governors.

SET procedures require that, where an allegation against a member of staff has been received, the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, member of SLT or the Chair of Governors must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see cover sheet of this document for contact details) within one working day. Where the allegation is against the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will consult with the LADO.

The guidance in KCSIE (Part Four) should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

14. USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. The Department for Education believes that the adoption of a 'no contact policy' at a school can leave staff unable to fully support and protect their students. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

15. SAFEGUARDING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND ABILITIES

Southend High School for Girls acknowledges that students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Southend High School for Girls will ensure that students with SEN and disabilities will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon. Staff are encouraged to be aware that students with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns such as bullying. All staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the student's disability and be aware that students with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse.

16. WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example pupils in the school or members of the public. For example:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- an legal obligation has been breached
- there has been a miscarriage of justice
- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed.

All staff members are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the school's Code of Conduct. The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government, the number is 0808 800 5000.

17. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Headteacher and Governing Body will seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding students and child protection and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If this assurance is not achieved, then an application to use premises will be refused.

APPENDIX 1: TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Keeping children safe in education (DfE, 2020) defines abuse as the maltreatment of a child. *‘Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.’*

The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our school is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. Our school recognises that there are a number of specific safeguarding issues about which staff need to be aware. These are listed below and this is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Child Sexual Exploitation

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 through the use of technology. Further information regarding some of these issues can be found below and these issues are also addressed in Annex A of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2020\)](#)

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;

- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

(Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues).

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;

Having a physical or learning disability;

- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

All staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Child Criminal Exploitation

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Peer on peer abuse

Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer-on-peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures.

Peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, 'up-skirting' 'sexting' or sexually harmful behaviour. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Peer-on-peer abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse.

The school will use the guidance set out in:

[Preventing and tackling bullying](#) Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE, July 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying> and [Sexting in school and colleges Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people \(UKCCIS, 2017\)](#). and [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(DfE, May 2018\)](#)

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;

- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

At SHSG we will support the victims of peer on peer abuse by carefully considering any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the schools or college's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- is the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse?
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff; and
- other related issues and wider context

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, schools and colleges should follow general safeguarding principles as per Keeping Children Safe in Education. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).

For reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school or college premises and school or college transport, should be considered immediately. Where appropriate the school will utilise behaviour and bullying policies and provide pastoral support.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to local children's social care. Any Report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care.

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept

safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out in the 'procedures' section of this document and with reference to the following guidance:

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

See KCSIE (2020) page 85.

Spotting the Signs

A young person's involvement in county lines activity often leaves signs. A young person might exhibit some of these signs, either as a member or as an associate of a gang dealing drugs. Any sudden changes in a young person's lifestyle should be discussed with them. Some indicators of county lines involvement and exploitation are listed below, with those at the top of particular concern:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts / phone calls
- Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

Bullying

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, school staff will discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead who may report concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. However, external support will be given to students

whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Online Safety

Southend High School for Girls is committed to providing a safe environment for online learning.

When children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. However, many students are able to access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, as a school we:

- Ensure that online safety is viewed as a safeguarding issue and that practice is in line with national and local recommendations and requirements.
- Ensure there are appropriate and up-to-date policies regarding online safety which cover acceptable use of technology.
- Ensure that suitable and appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Work with technical staff to monitor the safety and security of school systems and networks.
- Ensure that online safety is embedded within a progressive whole school curriculum, which enables all students to develop an understanding of online safety and know how to report a concern.
- Support the Designated Safeguarding Lead by ensuring they have sufficient time and resources to fulfil their online safety responsibilities.
- Ensure there are robust reporting channels for the school community to access regarding online safety concerns, including internal, local and national support.
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken regarding the safe use of technology. Audit and evaluate online safety practice to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to:

- Read the school AUPs and encourage their children to adhere to them.
- Support the school in their online safety approaches by discussing online safety issues with their children and reinforce appropriate, safe online behaviours at home.
- Role model safe and appropriate use of technology and social media.
- Abide by the school's home-school agreement and/or AUPs. Identify changes in behaviour that could indicate that their child is at risk of harm online.
- Seek help and support from the school, or other appropriate agencies, if they or their child encounter risk or concerns online.
- Encourage their child to use school systems, such as learning platforms, and other network resources, safely and appropriately.
- Take responsibility for their own awareness in relation to the risks and opportunities posed by new and emerging technologies.

In order to ensure the safety and welfare of children when pupils are engaging in guided home learning, the school will follow the DfE remote learning guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

and the guidance for online learning set out in Safer Working Practices (April 2020)

The platform for remote learning used by Southend High School for Girls is Microsoft Teams.

Drugs/Students whose parents/carers or family members misuse drugs

The school will be alert to behaviour which might indicate that the child is experiencing difficult home circumstances. Where problems are observed or suspected, or if a child chooses to disclose that there are difficulties at home and it is not deemed a safeguarding issue, the school will follow the procedures set out in its drug policy. This should include protocols for assessing the student's welfare and support needs and when and how to involve other sources of support for the child such as Children's Services, services commissioned by the Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAAT) programmes. Students found in possession/under the influence of drugs: Any response to drug-related incidents will balance the needs of the individual student concerned with the wider school community. In deciding what action to take the school will follow its own behaviour policy.

Fabricated or Induced Illness

The fabrication or induction of illness in children is a relatively rare form of child abuse. Where concerns exist about fabricated or induced illness, it requires professionals to work together, evaluating all the available evidence, in order to reach an understanding of the reasons for the child's signs and symptoms of illness. The management of these cases requires a careful medical evaluation which considers a range of possible diagnoses. At all times professionals need to keep an open mind to ensure that they have not missed a vital piece of information. More information can be found in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Our school understands that 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. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

At SHSG we identify students who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by:

- regularly monitoring progress of all students by their class teacher, learning manager and form tutor one-to-one sessions.
- All students who have been identified as having SEN have an Individual Support Plan (ISP). This is held in their digital profile on SIMS and is accessible by all subject teachers who should use it when considering quality first teaching and differentiation in their lesson planning.
- The ISP is created after discussion with the student, their parents, subject teachers and if appropriate, outside agencies.
- A student with a statement of special educational needs will also have an annual review.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out; and discuss any such cases with the safeguarding lead and children's social care. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases.

So-called 'Honour-based' Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' **abuse** (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

Children Missing Education (CME)

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when students are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) the school has:

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:

- a. leave school to be home educated
- b. move away from the school's location
- c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
- d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
- e. are permanently excluded

We will ensure that students who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a student leaves the school, we will record the name of the student's new school and their expected start date. Procedures will be followed in line with the school's Children Missing Education Policy.

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who

might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Child abuse linked to faith or belief

Faith and belief-based child abuse, including practices around 'spirit possession' and 'witchcraft', is a hidden crime, which makes it difficult to quantify in terms of magnitude. This kind of abuse is generally under-reported.

The forms of abuse that follow fall into the four main categories below.

Physical abuse

This can involve ritualistic beating, burning, cutting, stabbing, semi-strangulating, tying up the child, or rubbing chilli peppers or other substances on the child's genitals or eyes.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can occur in the form of isolation. A child may not be allowed near or to share a room with family members, and threatened with abandonment. The child may also be persuaded that they are possessed.

Neglect

In situations of neglect, the child's family and community may have failed to ensure appropriate medical care, supervision, education, good hygiene, nourishment, clothing or warmth.

Sexual abuse

Children who have been singled out in this way can be particularly vulnerable to sexual abusers within the family, community or faith organisation. These people exploit the belief as a form of control or threat.

Where does it happen?

Child abuse linked to faith or belief is not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community. Examples have been recorded worldwide across various religions including Christians, Muslims and Hindus.

Abuse may happen anywhere, but it most commonly occurs within the child's home.

Common factors and causes

A range of factors can contribute to the abuse of a child for reasons of faith or belief. Some of the most common ones are below.

- **Belief in evil spirits**
Belief in evil spirits that can 'possess' children is often accompanied by a belief that a possessed child can 'infect' others with the condition. This could be through contact with shared food, or simply being in the presence of the child.
- **Scapegoating**
A child could be singled out as the cause of misfortune within the home, such as financial difficulties, divorce, infidelity, illness or death.
- **Bad behaviour**
Sometimes bad or abnormal behaviour is attributed to spiritual forces. Examples include a child being disobedient, rebellious, overly independent, wetting the bed, having nightmares or falling ill.
- **Physical differences**
A child could be singled out for having a physical difference or disability. Documented cases included children with learning disabilities, mental health issues, epilepsy, autism, stammers and deafness.
- **Gifts and uncommon characteristics**
If a child has a particular skill or talent, this can sometimes be rationalised as the result of possession or witchcraft. This can also be the case if the child is from a multiple or difficult pregnancy.
- **Complex family structure**
Research suggests that a child living with extended family, non biological parents, or foster parents is more at risk. In these situations they are more likely to have been subject to trafficking and made to work in servitude.

Children and the court system

Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise

information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Domestic abuse

The definition of Domestic Abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

(See KCSIE (2020) page 86)

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside our school and/or can occur between children outside school. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact that they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

Mental Health

All staff at Southend High School for Girls are 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.

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Children who have a Social Worker

At Southend High School for Girls we recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker, for example regular meetings with the child's Pastoral Support Officer.

APPENDIX 2: SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS DURING A CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK AND ANY PERIOD OF LOCKDOWN/SCHOOL CLOSURE

This section of the policy applies to any period of school closure due to Coronavirus and reflects updated advice from the DfE and Local Authority.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers, and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
- With a child protection plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Core safeguarding principles

During this period Southend High School for Girls will continue to follow these important safeguarding principles in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020:

- The best interests of children must come first

- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

The following procedures for reporting concerns during this period will be circulated to all staff and are outlined below:

How to report a safeguarding concern during the school closure period

I have a concern about a pupil. What should I do?

If you have a concern about a pupil during this period of school closure call the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) on the Safeguarding Line 07387808400

- Once you have spoken with the Designated Safeguarding Lead log the incident on CPOMS.
- CPOMS can be accessed via the 'STAFF' tab on the school website and clicking on the icon or by typing southendhigh.cpoms.net into your web browser. To log in you will need your username (your school email address) and the password that you created when you first registered.
- When you have logged the incident, you will be given asked to assign the incident to a member of staff and send an alert. Please 'ASSIGN' the incident to DSL and 'ALERT' the pupil's Head of Year. You do this by simply typing the staff name(s) in the **box and then clicking 'SUBMIT'**.

I am unable to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and it is an emergency: the pupil requires immediate protection/is at risk of significant harm?

Any professional can make a referral to Children's Social Care. If you believe that a pupil requires immediate protection then contact:

- Children's Social Care (see numbers at the bottom of this page)
- The Police (call 101 or 999 if an emergency)
- The NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Telephone numbers for Local Authority Children's Services (Social Care)

Southend on Sea 01702215007 (Emergency Duty Team 03456061212)

Essex 03456037627 or 0345 606 1212

Barking and Dagenham 0208 227 3811 or 02085948356

Redbridge 0208 708 3885

Thurrock 01375652802

Always act in the best interests of the child.

DSL (and deputies) arrangements

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, EWMHS and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during any period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers.

Where any child we expect to attend school during the closure does not attend, or stops attending we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by making absence calls or home visits where appropriate.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We will use the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

Contact plans for vulnerable students

Students identified as vulnerable will receive a weekly home telephone contact call from a member of pastoral staff.

Safeguarding all children

Staff are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in this document.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Concerns will be reported to the Head of Year or Safeguarding Team.

Online safety

In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy

Guidelines and instructions have been sent to staff ensuring appropriate safeguarding practices in their approach to remote learning – for example, if they are pre-recording videos to share, making video calls or phoning pupils. This information is available in the school's Remote Learning Policy.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in this section.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school

- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

Staff recruitment, training and induction

Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 and Annex A

Keeping records of who is on site

We will keep a record of which staff are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our Single Central Record up to date.

Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy

Policy Revised September 2020