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QfL Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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This policy has been written in accordance with guidelines published by:



1. Introduction and Statement

Quest for Learning recognises its duty of care to safeguard children as detailed under the Children Acts' 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019.

Quest for Learning is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children, and taking all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and protect children from harm, abuse and neglect.

Quest for Learning acknowledges its duty to act appropriately with regards to any allegations towards anyone working on its behalf, or towards any disclosures or suspicion of abuse.

Quest for Learning believes that:

- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation and /or identity, have the right to equal protection from harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

2. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019
- What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board guidelines

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, committee members/board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone in a position of trust.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children's Act 1989).

3. Organisational Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside the following organisational policies and guidance:

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Retention and Disposal Policy

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Home Working Guidelines
- Privacy Notices for: Workforce, Pupils and Online
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Schools Safeguarding Safer Recruitment Toolkit

4. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and young people who receive *Quest for Learning* services. This includes children of adults who use our services
- Provide all those in a position of trust with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

To keep children safe *Quest for Learning* will:

- Provide a setting where children feel listened to, safe, secure, valued and respected
- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead for children and ensure a clear line of accountability with regards to safeguarding concerns
- Ensure all those in a position of trust have been provided with up to date and relevant information, training, support and supervision to enable them to fulfil their role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection
- Provide a clear procedure to follow when safeguarding and child protection concerns arise
- Ensure effective and appropriate communication between all individuals in a position of trust
- Build strong partnerships with other agencies to promote effective and appropriate multi-agency working, information sharing and good practice.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All individuals in a position of trust must:

- Understand the different types of abuse and recognise the possible risks and indicators
- Understand their responsibility to report any concerns that a child is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected. This includes reporting any concern they may have regarding another person's behaviour towards a child or children
- If appropriate; liaise with other agencies, contribute to safeguarding assessments and attend child protection meetings / core groups / conferences
- Record and store information legally, professionally and securely in line with organisational policies and procedures
- Undertake the required level of training for their role in line with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board standards, every 3 years for Generalist and Advanced Safeguarding and every 2 years for Designated Leads.
- Understand the line of accountability for reporting safeguarding concerns, and be fully aware of the organisation's safeguarding lead and their role within the organisation.

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All individuals working in a position of trust at *Quest for Learning* will follow the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures/Local Authority guidance in all cases of abuse, or suspected abuse (these can be found at www.OSCB.org.uk).

It is a mandatory requirement that all individuals working for *Quest for Learning* undertake the required level of training for their role in line with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board standards. It is the responsibility of the Administrator to keep an up-to-date record of training completed. This record is kept along with the Single Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks, further details of which can be found in the Charity's Safer Recruitment Policy.

Due to the nature of the work carried out by *Quest for Learning*, tutors are required to familiarise themselves with the safeguarding procedures, including a clear understanding of who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead, within each school they are contracted to work.

This policy, along with the Safer Recruitment Policy, is available to all and can be accessed at www.questforlearning.org.uk/content/qfl-policies-schools

6. Safer Recruitment

Safe recruitment is central to the safeguarding of children and young people. All organisations which employ people to work with children in a position of trust have a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes ensuring that the organisation adopts safe recruitment and selection procedures which prevent unsuitable persons from gaining access to children. Further details can be found in the *Quest for Learning* Safer Recruitment Policy. Please see the Schools Safeguarding Safe Recruitment Toolkit for further guidance on safe recruitment, <http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/node/358>

7. Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. All individuals in a position of trust should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its contents.

Quest for Learning will complete an annual self-assessment to appraise their safeguarding practice against OSCB standards, please see www.oscb.org.uk

8. Document Version History

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		Section 3 – policy documents to be referred to.	Operations/DSL	Quest for Learning
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5	11/03/2021	Amendments to Appendix A: Guiding Principles to reflect introduction of QfL Safeguarding Alert Form for tutors.	Tamzin Einon Head of Teaching/DSL	Tamzin Einon Head of Teaching/DSL Quest for Learning

Signed:



Tamzin Einon

Date: 01/09/2020

Role: Head of Teaching

Appendix A: Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

1. Introduction

All professionals have a responsibility to report concerns to Children's social care under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, if they believe or suspect that the child;

- Has suffered significant harm;
- Is likely to suffer significant harm;
- Has a disability, developmental and welfare needs which are likely only to be met through provision of family support services (with agreement of the child's parent) under the Children Act 1989;
- Is a Child in Need whose development would be likely to be impaired without provision of service.

2. What to do if you are concerned about a child

Supporting children

If/when a child reports they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, or have caused or are causing physical or sexual harm to others, the initial response from all professionals should be to listen carefully to what the child says and to observe the child's behaviour and circumstances to:

- Clarify the concerns;
- Offer re-assurance about how the child will be kept safe;
- Explain what action will be taken and within what timeframe.

The child must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality, as this could prejudice police investigations, especially in cases of sexual abuse.

If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to children's social care, they should be asked for their views.

It should be explained to the child that whilst their view will be taken into account, the professional has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and the safety of other children

Confidentiality

Children have a right to confidentiality under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It's important to respect the wishes of a child or any person who doesn't consent to share confidential information.

If you're not given consent to share information, you may still lawfully go ahead if the child is experiencing, or is at risk of, significant harm.

Child protection concerns, disclosures from children or safeguarding allegations made against a person in a position of trust must not be discussed across the workforce as a whole. This information should be shared solely with Designated Safeguarding Leads, Children's Social Care and/or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) as appropriate.

Personal information which is shared by the child or young person on a 1:1 level, such as sexual orientation or gender identification, should not be disclosed to the workforce as a whole.

If staff and volunteers wish to discuss situations with colleagues to gain a wider perspective, this should be

done on an anonymous basis with names and other identifying information relating to the child and their family remaining strictly confidential.

Seven golden rules for information sharing

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act 1998 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be certain of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Dealing with Disclosures

All staff should ensure:

A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals, to help keep the child or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.

Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

All staff should know who the *Quest for Learning* DSL is and who to approach if the DSL is unavailable, in addition tutors must familiarise themselves with this information for each school they are contracted to work in for *Quest for Learning*. Ultimately, all staff have the right to make a referral to the police or social care directly and should do this if, for whatever reason, there are difficulties following the agreed protocol, e.g., they are the only adult on the premises at the time and have concerns about sending a child home.

Guiding principles: the seven R's:

Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and take it seriously
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only so far as is honest and reliable
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep, e.g., 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be alright now' or 'I'll keep this confidential'
- Do reassure, e.g., you could say: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you came to me', 'I am sorry this has happened', 'We are going to do something together to get help'

Respond

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, i.e., 'did he touch your private parts?' or 'did she hurt you?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court
- Do not ask the child why something has happened.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be a senior member of staff

Report

- Share concerns with the DSL as soon as possible.
- **Tutors must share concerns with the school DSL as soon as possible, this must be followed up by informing the Quest for Learning DSL that a referral has been made. This should be done via the QfL Safeguarding Alert Form**
- If you are not able to contact your DSL or the Deputy, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact the children's services department directly

Record

- If possible, make some very brief notes at the time, and record them as soon as possible
- Keep your original notes on file
- Record the date, time, place, persons present and noticeable nonverbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words
- Complete a body map to indicate the position of any noticeable bruising
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'

Remember

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues
- Try to get some support for yourself if you need it

Review processes (led by *school DSL* in collaboration with *Quest for Learning DSL* if necessary)

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?

- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

Supporting those working with children

Quest for Learning recognises that staff who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. It is important that all staff supporting children are able to discuss safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and with their line manager in regular supervision. *Quest for Learning* also recognise that our Designated Person(s) should have access to support and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised by the LA.

Reporting concerns

The referrer should provide information about their concerns and any information they may have gathered prior to referral. They will be asked for the following:

- Full names, dates of birth and gender of all child/ren in the household;
- Family address and (where relevant) school / nursery attended;
- Identity of those with parental responsibility and any other significant adults who may be involved in caring for the child such as grandparents;
- Names and date of birth of all household members, if available;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents;
- Any special needs of children or parents;
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents;
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location;
- Child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Whether the child needs immediate protection;
- Details of alleged perpetrator, if relevant;
- Referrer's relationship and knowledge of child and parents;
- Known involvement of other agencies / professionals (e.g. GP);
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral;
- The child's views and wishes, if known.

Other information may be relevant and some information may not be available at the time of making the referral. However, the report should not be delayed, in order to collect information, if the delay may place the child at risk of significant harm.

Parents/carers must be informed about any referral unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.

3. To report a new concern

Immediate concerns about a child

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is the front door to Children's Social Care for all child protection and immediate safeguarding concerns. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, for example:

- Allegations/concerns that the child has been sexually/physically abused
- Concerns that the child is suffering from severe neglect or other severe health risks
- Concern that a child is living in or will be returned to a situation that may place him/her at immediate risk
- The child is frightened to return home

- The child has been abandoned or parent is absent

You should call the MASH immediately Tel: 0345 050 7666

The Oxfordshire MASH Referral Form (MASH Enquiry online referral form) may be used by professionals only to refer children to social services. Or you can email a report to MASH on the secure email on: mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

If you have a concern about a child/family but it is not an immediate safeguarding concern, you should refer to the Threshold of Needs matrix which can be found at, https://www.oscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/6-Oxfordshire_Threshold_of_Needs-2019.pdf

This tool is designed to support professionals to make decisions as to whether contact should be made with Children's Social Care.

If after consulting the Threshold of Needs, you still have concerns that do not require an immediate safeguarding response, you should contact the Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS) and request a 'no names' consultation (meaning you don't give the child's name). You can then discuss the situation with them and they will advise you on what to do next. If a referral needs to be made, they will advise you of this.

- LCSS Central: 0345 241 2705
- LCSS North (including Banbury, Witney, Bicester, Carterton and Woodstock): 0345 241 2703
- LCSS South (including Abingdon, Faringdon, Wantage, Thame, Didcot and Henley): 0345 241 2608

If you have a concern out of office hours call Emergency Duty Team on 0800 833 408

4. Referrals on open cases

If you want to speak to someone about an already open case contact the relevant Children's Social Care Team. If you do not have the name and contact details for the relevant Social Worker, contact MASH on 0345 050 7666.

5. Allegations against others working with children

All allegations of abuse by those who work with children must be taken seriously, whether they are in a paid or unpaid capacity. This procedure should be applied when there is an allegation or concern that a person who works with children, 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.

To report an allegation or concern about a person in a position of trust, please contact the LADO and Safeguarding Team on 01865 810603 or email: LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

6. Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where those in a position of trust fail to do so. All those in a position of trust should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their organisation.

While *Quest for Learning* has a separate whistleblowing policy, this is a summary that outlines the process when there is a concern that safeguarding issues have not been reported or followed correctly.

This does not replace the whistleblowing policy and should be read in conjunction with the charity's policy which is available to all and can be accessed at www.questforlearning.org.uk/content/qfl-policies-schools

Whistleblowing is a term that is used when staff want to report a concern within their organisation that involves their manager or a person senior to them in the organisation which may prevent them from following the normal reporting systems.

There are a limited number of areas that can be called Whistleblowing, and the policy protects staff from being punished for raising concerns.

Within *Quest for Learning*, the Executive Director is the senior manager and responsible for all staff. If you are concerned that any member of staff within the charity is not following safeguarding processes or behaving in a way that is placing children at risk, you should, in the first place, make the Executive Director aware.

If your concern is about the Executive Director, you should raise this with our Chair of the Board of Trustees.

If you would prefer to raise your concerns outside of the charity, then you are able to contact the NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk for national organisations or make contact with Oxfordshire County Council.

If you believe that a member of staff is harming a child (an allegation) and this has been reported to the Executive Director and no/ insufficient action has been taken, or the member of staff you have concerns about is the Executive Director, then you are able to contact the Designated Officers team (LADO) on 01865 810603 or [email lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:email.lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Further guidance for staff can be accessed through:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2> and through the NSPCC website <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

Appendix B: Abuse and Neglect

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. If staff are unsure, they should **always** speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Definitions and Indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse: 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.

Indicators of physical abuse / factors that should increase concern

- Multiple bruising or bruises and scratches (especially on the head and face)
- Clusters of bruises – e.g., fingertip bruising (caused by being grasped)
- Bruises around the neck and behind the ears – the most common abusive injuries are to the head
- Bruises on the back, chest, buttocks, or on the inside of the thighs
- Marks indicating injury by an instrument – e.g., linear bruising (stick), parallel bruising (belt), marks of a buckle
- Bite marks
- Deliberate burning may also be indicated by the pattern of an instrument or object – e.g., electric fire, cooker, cigarette
- Scalds with upward splash marks or *tide marks*
- Untreated injuries
- Recurrent injuries or burns
- Bald patches.

In the social context of the school, it is normal to ask about a noticeable injury. The response to such an enquiry is generally light-hearted and detailed. So, most of all, concern should be increased when:

- the explanation given does not match the injury
- the explanation uses words or phrases that do not match the vocabulary of the child (adult words)
- no explanation is forthcoming
- the child (or the parent/carer) is secretive or evasive
- the injury is accompanied by allegations of abuse or assault

You should be concerned if the child or young person:

- is reluctant to have parents/carers contacted
- runs away or shows fear of going home
- is aggressive towards themselves or others
- flinches when approached or touched
- is reluctant to undress to change clothing for sport

- wears long sleeves during hot weather
- is unnaturally compliant in the presence of parents/carers.
- has a fear of medical help or attention
- admits to a punishment that appears excessive.

Link to OSCB guidance on physical abuse <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/physical-abuse/>

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

Indicators of emotional abuse

Developmental issues

- Delays in physical, mental and emotional development
- Poor school performance
- Speech disorders, particularly sudden disorders or changes.

Behaviour

- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation (I'm stupid, ugly, worthless etc)
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Suicide attempts
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging
- Acting out
- Poor trust in significant adults
- Regressive behaviour – e.g., wetting
- Eating disorders
- Destructive tendencies
- Neurotic behaviour
- Arriving early at school, leaving late

Social issues

- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Withdrawal from social interaction
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Insecure, clinging behaviour
- Poor social relationships

Emotional responses

- Extreme fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations (“I deserve this”)
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-disgust
- Low self-esteem
- Unusually fearful with adults
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Most harm is produced in *low warmth, high criticism* homes, not from single incidents. Emotional abuse is difficult to define, identify/recognise and/or prove. Emotional abuse is chronic and cumulative and has a long-term impact.

It is sometimes possible to spot emotionally abusive behavior from parents and carer/s to their children, by the way that the adults are speaking to, or behaving towards children. An appropriate challenge or intervention could affect positive change and prevent more intensive work being carried out later on.

Link to OSCB guidance on emotional abuse <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/emotional-abuse/>

Link to OSCB guidance on Domestic Abuse <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/domestic-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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education see further details below.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- it is often planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic
- grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent
- grooming the child’s environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives.

Most people who sexually abuse children are men, but some women sexually abuse too.

Indicators of sexual abuse

Physical observations

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls
- Soreness in genital area, anus or mouth and other medical problems such as chronic itching
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections and discharges or abdominal pain

Behavioural observations

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age
- Sexualised behaviour or affection inappropriate for age
- Sexually provocative behaviour/promiscuity
- Hinting at sexual activity. Inexplicable decline in school performance
- Depression or other sudden apparent changes in personality as becoming insecure or clinging
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Socially isolated or withdrawn
- Overly compliant behaviour
- Acting out, aggressive behaviour
- Poor trust or fear concerning significant adults
- Regressive behaviour,
- Onset of wetting, by day or night; nightmares
- Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour
- Arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home
- Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Eating disorders or sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Become worried about clothing being removed

Link to OSCB guidance on sexual abuse <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/sexual-abuse/>

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

NSPCC research has highlighted the following examples of the neglect of children under 12:

- frequently going hungry
- frequently having to go to school in dirty clothes
- regularly having to look after themselves because of parents being away or having problems such as drug or alcohol misuse
- being abandoned or deserted
- living at home in dangerous physical conditions
- not being taken to the doctor when ill
- not receiving dental care.

Neglect is a difficult form of abuse to recognise and is often seen as less serious than other categories. It is, however, very damaging: children who are neglected often develop more slowly than others and may find it hard to make friends and fit in with their peer group.

Neglect is often noticed at a stage when it does not pose a risk to the child. The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (*What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused* DfE 2015) would suggest that an appropriate intervention or conversation at this early stage can address the issue and prevent a child continuing to suffer until it reaches a point when they are at risk of harm or in significant need.

Link to the OSCBB guidance on Neglect : <http://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/neglect/> the OSCB

have also created a neglect toolkit: <https://www.oscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Child-care-and-development-checklist-neglect-toolkit-2019-update.docx>

Neglect is often linked to other forms of abuse, so any concerns school staff have should at least be discussed with the DSL.

Indicators of neglect

The following is a summary of some of the indicators that may suggest a child is being abused or is at risk of harm. It is important to recognise that indicators alone cannot confirm whether a child is being abused. Each child should be seen in the context of their family and wider community and a proper assessment carried out by appropriate persons. What is important to keep in mind is that if you feel unsure or concerned, do something about it. Don't keep it to yourself. The OSCB neglect toolkit provides a more detailed list of indicators of neglect and is available to all staff

Physical indicators of neglect

- Constant hunger and stealing food
- Poor personal hygiene - unkempt, dirty or smelly
- Underweight
- Dress unsuitable for weather
- Poor state of clothing
- Illness or injury untreated

Behavioural indicators of neglect

- Constant tiredness
- Frequent absence from school or lateness
- Missing medical appointments
- Isolated among peers
- Frequently unsupervised
- Stealing or scavenging, especially food

Peer on peer abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise
- causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur

through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment as well as their emotional well-being. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children, adult students and school and college staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

Appendix C: Safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues which can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) can put children in danger.

Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. See page 11 in KCSIE2020 for further guidance and links to documents.

Serious violence

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

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence> and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Upskirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.

So-called 'honour-based' Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' Abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

Contextual safeguarding

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse. Additional information regarding contextual safeguarding is available here: <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

Link to OSCB guidance on contextual safeguarding <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/contextual-safeguarding/>

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may involve sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention

is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

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.

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

Link to OSCB guidance on CSE <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/child-exploitation-modern-slavery/> and the CSE screening tool <https://www.oscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Child-Exploitation-Screening-Tool.pdf>

Link to OSCB guidance on child criminal exploitation <https://www.oscb.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/child-exploitation-modern-slavery/child-drug-exploitation-county-lines/>

Government Guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

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 be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques

such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. 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.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism¹⁰³ should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and 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. **Further information can be found in KCSIE 2020 ANNEX A.**

Further information around safeguarding issues can be found in KCSIE 2020 ANNEX A and on the OSCB website.

Appendix D: Staff Induction, Awareness and Training

- All members of the *Quest for Learning* teaching team have been provided with a copy of Part One of "*Keeping Children Safe in Education*" (2020) which covers safeguarding information for all staff. The DSL and DDSL (Senior Leaders) will read the entire document. Senior leaders and all members of staff who work directly with children will access Annex A within *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020*. Members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood Part One and Annex A – this record is kept with all other safeguarding documentation in the secure online document cloud.
- The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including temporary staff) are aware of the charity's internal safeguarding processes.
- All staff members (including temporary staff) will receive training to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues.
- All staff members (including temporary staff) will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually.
- All staff members (including temporary staff) will be made aware of the charity's expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff behaviour policy (or code of conduct) and Acceptable Use Policy.

- The DSL and Executive Director will provide an annual report to the Board of Trustees detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date register of who has been trained.
- Although the Board of Trustees has a nominated lead for safeguarding, all members of the Board will familiarise themselves with the safeguarding policy and procedures at least annually and Safeguarding will be a standing agenda item at meetings of the Board.

Appendix E: Contacts/links

MASH	0345 050 7666	http://www.oscb.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child/
Out Of Ours Emergency Duty Team	0800 833 408	
LCSS North	0345 2412703	LCSS.North@oxfordshire.gov.uk
LCSS Central	0345 2412705	LCSS.Central@oxfordshire.gov.uk
LCSS South	0345 2412608	LCSS.South@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Designated Officer (LADO)	01865 810603	Lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Kingfisher Team (CSE)	01865 309196	
Police: Emergency	999	
Non-emergency	101	
OSCB		oscb.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Information sharing advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Whistleblowing guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

MASH leaflet for parents:

<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/socialandhealthcare/childrenfamilies/MashLeafletForParents.pdf>

When to call the Police by the National Police Chiefs Council – NPCC:

[When to call the Police](#)

Appendix F: Covid-19

The below links to Covid-19 guidance relate exclusively to school settings and have been provided to Oxfordshire Schools by Oxfordshire County Council.

The information is not exhaustive and must be considered alongside up to date guidance that may have been released after the publication date of this policy.

Oxfordshire Guidance

- [COVID - 19 Virtual Lessons](#)
- [COVID - 19 Safeguarding Policy amendment](#)
- [COVID - 19 Internet Safety for Families](#)
- [COVID - 19 EPS - Loss and Bereavement](#)

Government Guidance

- [DFE - Attendance](#)
- [COVID-19 List of Online Education Resources for Home Education](#)
- [COVID -19 Local Authorities and Children's Social Care](#)
- [COVID -19 What you need to do](#)
- [COVID -19 Shielding and Protecting extremely vulnerable people](#)
- [COVID -19 Get help with Technology for remote education](#)
- [COVID-19 Support for victims of domestic abuse](#)
- [COVID -19 Safeguarding and remote education](#)
- [COVID - 19 guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#)
- [COVID - 19 Closure of Educational Settings Information for Parents and Carers](#)
- [Data Protection - Toolkit for Schools](#)
- [COVID-19 Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for schools and other educational settings](#)
- [COVID -19 Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1ST June 2020](#)
- [COVID - 19 What parents and carers need to know](#)
- [COVID- 19 Safeguarding in school's colleges and other providers](#)
- [COVID -19 Reopening schools and other educational settings from 1st June](#)