



Child Protection Policy

Perins School

2024/25



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Perins School Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We also recognise the important role that school plays in supporting the mental health and well-being of our pupils.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

Definitions

Within this document:

Child protection is an aspect of safeguarding but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term **staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and governors.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

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

Abuse could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and / or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

Aims

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in so doing ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.

Principles and Values

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children have a right to be protected from harm.

- All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in the school or in the community, taking into account *contextual safeguarding*, in accordance with the guidance.
- We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.
- As a school we have regard to the Human Rights Act 1998, The Equality Act 2010 and The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact Children’s Social Care or the police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child’s best interests.

Leadership and Management

We recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can compromise good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process.

In this school any individual can contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputies (DDSL) if they have concerns about a young person.

Name	Position	Role
Alexei Western	Deputy Head teacher (DSL – Designated Safeguarding Lead)	Refer cases of suspected abuse to relevant agencies. Act as a source of advice, expertise within the school. Liaise with Head teacher to inform of issues / update of ongoing investigations
Fernley Calver	Guidance Manager (Deputy DSL)	Will support and deputise for the DSL
Fiona Stone	Guidance Manager (Deputy DSL)	Will support and deputise for the DSL
Matt Jackson	Guidance Manager (Deputy DSL)	Will support and deputise for the DSL
Mark Nevola	Head of School (Deputy DSL)	Will support and deputise for the DSL
Clive Surry	Chief Operations Officer (Deputy DSL – Out of School Hours Activity)	Will support and deputise for the DSL
Amy Craig	Assistant Head teacher (Deputy DSL)	Will support and deputise for the DSL

There is a nominated safeguarding trustee, **Charlie Hammel**, who will take leadership responsibility for safeguarding. As the Chair of Trustees, **Katy Toms** will receive reports of allegations against the Head of School and Executive Headteacher and act on the behalf of the Trust Board.

As an employer we follow safer recruitment guidance as set out in KCSiE 2024.

Training

All staff in our school are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. Staff are also 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. Training is provided; with all staff annually completing an online course in safeguarding young people. This is supplemented by regular reference to safeguarding during briefings. Separate training is provided to all new staff during their induction, referencing specifics to Perins School's context as well as completion of the online course in safeguarding young people. To enable them to fulfil their role the DSL will attend Safeguard Lead training at least every other year and will attend other events/trainings that are specific to the location of Perins School and the surrounding areas.

Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings and then captured in the next whole school training. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.

Trustee Training

The trustees are all expected to do Safeguarding and Prevent training annually through the National Online Safety portal. The Chair of Trustees and nominated safeguarding trustee are also enrolled on the Level 3 Safeguarding course through CPD online.

Referral

Following any concerns raised, the DSL will assess the information and consider if significant harm has happened or there is a risk that it may happen. If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm has been reached, or if it is not clear if the threshold is met, then the DSL will contact Children's Social Care and if appropriate the police. If the DSL or DDSL is not available or there are immediate concerns, the staff member will refer directly to Children's Social Care and the police if appropriate.

Generally the DSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral. However there are situations where this may not be possible or appropriate, particularly when informing parents/carers may place the child at further risk

***N.B.** The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the teacher to report directly to the police. The DSL should also be made aware.*

Confidentiality

- We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners' (DfE 2015) guidance
- There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies who have a statutory duty for child protection.
- Information will be shared with individuals within the school who 'need to know'.
- All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential.

As a school we will educate pupils to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it through:

- The content of the curriculum (in particular during Life Studies lessons, assemblies and tutor activities)
- A school culture and ethos which helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.
- Digital Signage
- 1:1 and small group interventions
- The 'Perins School Speaker Program'

Dealing with allegations against staff

If a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff this information will be recorded and passed to the Head of School **Mark Nevola**. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted and the relevant guidance will be followed. If the allegation is against the headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO or Chair of Governors directly.

If the concern does not meet the threshold for LADO notification, the school will follow the steps as set out in the Low Level Concerns policy 2021 (see annex 10)

When appointing new staff and/or reviewing current staff, the school will take into account behaviours that indicate that someone may not be suitable to work with children.

Dealing with allegations against pupils

At Perins school, we have a zero-tolerance approach to all types of Child on Child abuse. If a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a pupil abusing another pupil within the school, the 'Child on Child Abuse' guidance will be followed (Annex 6)

Legal context

Section 175 (Maintained schools) or section 157 (Independent schools and academies) of the education act 2002
Children Act 2004 & 1989

Guidance

Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership protocols and guidance and their procedures

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#)

[FGM Act 2003 Mandatory Reporting Guidance \(2016\)](#)

Policy review

As a school, we review this policy at least annually in line with DfE, HSCP and HCC requirements and other relevant statutory guidance.

Date approved by Trust Board: 26/9/24

Date reviewed by Trust Board: 26/9/24

Roles and responsibilities within Perins School

Staff responsibilities

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
 - Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
 - Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise, assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
 - Attend training in order to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
 - Understand the possible links between mental health problems in young people and the possibility that they are suffering or at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
 - Understand that children going missing from education are at an increased risk of abuse and exploitation, and that absence from education is also a cause for concern and a safeguarding risk.
 - Recognise and fulfil obligations towards online safety, ensuring that student online behaviour in lessons is monitored at all times.
 - Recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse in relation to children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions.
 - Recognise that some pupils may be disproportionately vulnerable. For example, some may be at more risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination.
 - Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” with regards to all safeguarding issues.
 - Record their concerns using CPOMS if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL as soon as practical that day if they believe the child is at immediate risk. If the DSL is not contactable immediately a DDSL should be informed
 - Record concerns around a child’s mental health that might also be safeguarding concerns.
 - Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or DDSL is not available.
 - Follow the allegations procedures (Annex 5) if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
 - Follow the procedures set out by the HSCP and take account of guidance issued by the DfE.
 - Support pupils in line with their child protection plan.
 - Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to “keep a secret”.
 - Notify the DSL or DDSL of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
 - Have an understanding of Early Help and be able to identify children who may benefit from early help, understanding that there is a potential need for students that have experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded or are in alternative provision or pupil referral unit.
- Perins School Child Protection Policy 2024/25

- Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.
- Ensure they know who the DSL and DDSL are and know how to contact them.
- Have an awareness of the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Staff Behaviour Policy (or Code of Conduct), procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education and the role of the DSL.

The safeguarding leads' (DSL and DDSL) and the senior leadership teams' responsibilities:

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 guidance
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- Ensure staff are alert to the various factors that can increase the need for early help
- Working with Children's Social Care, support their assessment and planning processes including the school's attendance at conference and core group meetings.
- When informed by the local authority that a child has a social worker, the DSL should hold and use this information in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This includes unauthorised absence or missing education and the resulting provision of academic and/or pastoral support.
- Carry out tasks delegated by the Trust Board such as training of staff, safer recruitment and maintaining a single central register.
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school.
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures.
- Ensure that all students are educated and protected from abuse through online platforms, including mobile and smart technology. (see online safety policy) and that staff are providing the first line of defence against unsafe online behaviour in school.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DfE) and the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures
- Refer cases to social care, and the police where appropriate, in a timely manner avoiding any delay that could place the child at more risk.
- Assist the Trust Board Body in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities set out in legislation and statutory guidance
- Attend appropriate training and demonstrate evidence of continuing professional development to carry out the role, including ensuring formal training at least every 2 years and knowledge and skills updated at regular intervals and at least annually.
- Ensure every member of staff knows who the DSL and the Deputy are, have an awareness of the DSL role and know how to contact them.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns about a child to the DSL and concerns about an adult to the Headteacher.
- Ensure whole school training occurs regularly with at least annual updates so that staff and volunteers can fulfil their responsibilities knowledgeably.
- Ensure any members of staff joining the school outside of the agreed training schedule receive induction prior to commencement of their duties
- Keep records of child protection concerns securely and separately from the main pupil file and use these records to assess the likelihood of risk
- Ensure that safeguarding records are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) and in a timely fashion when a child transfers school
- Ensure that where a pupil transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, their information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. Consideration is given to a transition meeting prior to moving if the case is complex or on-going.
- Be aware of the training opportunities and briefings provided by HSCP to ensure staff are aware of the latest local guidance on safeguarding
- Develop, implement and review procedures in the school that enable the identification and reporting of all cases, or suspected cases, of abuse

In addition to fulfilling the roles and responsibilities of staff and senior leadership team, the DSL will also follow the role description set out in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

Trust Board responsibilities

- Ensure the school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures including a Child Protection Policy, a Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct, a Behaviour Policy and a response to children who go missing or who are absent from education.
- Ensure that the policies, procedures and training at Perins are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Ensure HSCP is informed in line with local requirements about the discharge of duties via the annual safeguarding audit
- Recruitment, selection and induction follows safer recruitment practice including all appropriate checks.
- Allegations against staff are dealt with by the headteacher. Allegations against the headteacher are dealt with by the Chair of Trustees
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team is appointed as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and has this recorded in their job description
- Staff have been trained appropriately and this is updated in line with guidance
- Any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses are remedied without delay
- A nominated trustee for safeguarding is identified

Perins School Child Protection Procedures

Overview

The following procedures apply to all staff working in the school and will be covered by training to enable staff to understand their role and responsibility.

The aim of our procedures is to provide a robust framework which enables staff to take appropriate action when they are concerned that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm.

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult, the interests of the child must be paramount.

All staff are aware that very young children with those with disabilities, special needs or with language delay may be more likely to communicate concerns with behaviours rather than words. Additionally staff will question the cause of knocks and bumps in children who have limited mobility which will include children visiting the site as well as those who are pupils.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, spots signs or indicators of abuse, or they have a disclosure of abuse made to them they must:

1. Make an initial record of the information using CPOMS or by completing the 'Recording Form' (**Annex 2**) if unable to access CPOMS.
2. Report it to the DSL/DDSL immediately
3. The DSL/DDSL will consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, however urgent medical attention should not be delayed if the DSL/DDSL is not immediately available
4. The DSL/DDSL will make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:
 - Dates and times of their observations
 - Dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved.
 - Any injuries
 - Explanations given by the child / adult
 - What action was taken
 - Any actual words or phrases used by the child

Any hand written notes must be signed and dated by the author and should be scanned and uploaded to CPOMS.

5. In the absence of the DSL or their Deputy, be prepared to refer directly to Children's Social Care (and the police if appropriate) if there is the potential for immediate significant harm

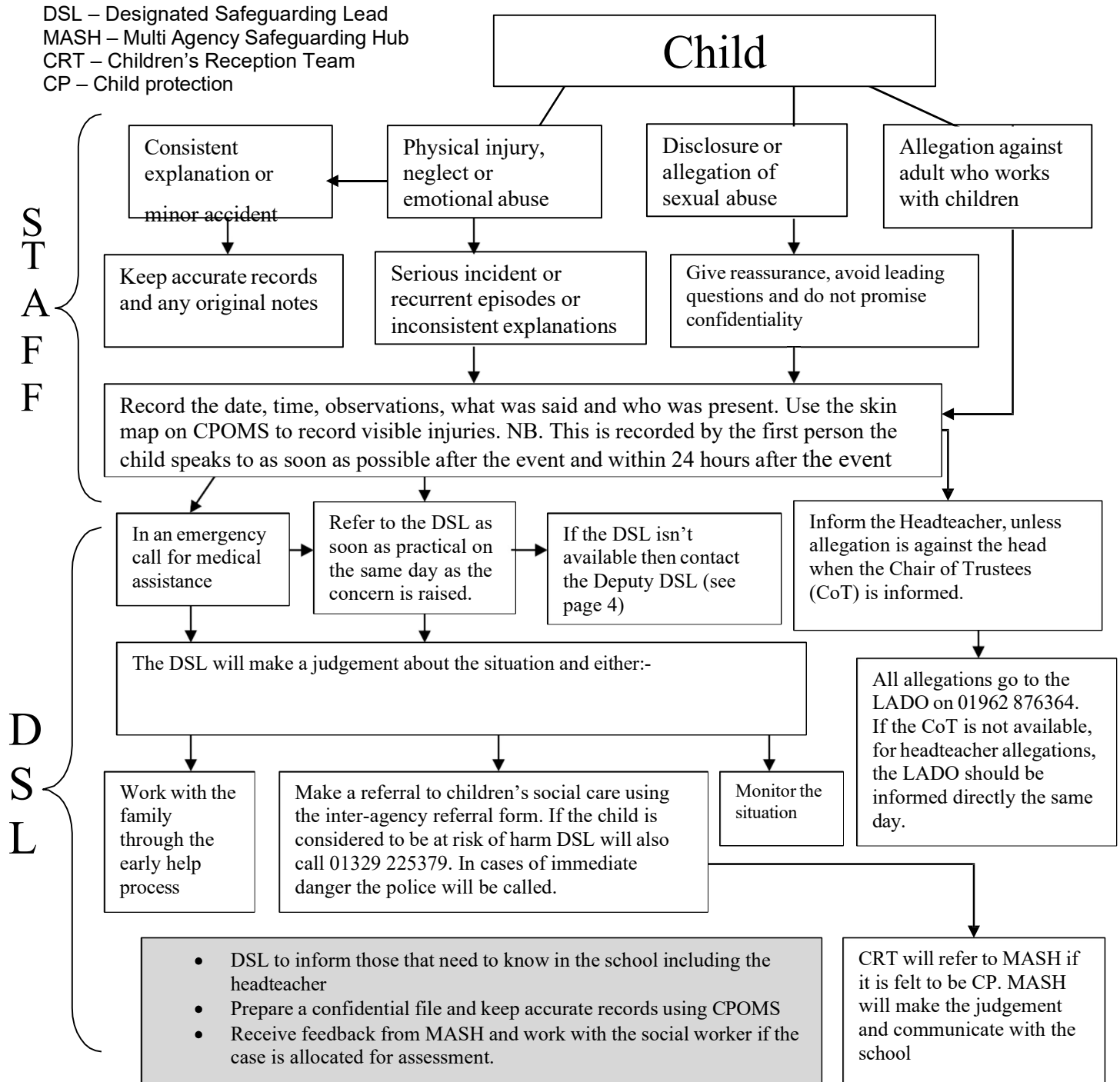
Following a report of concerns the DSL must:

1. Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm in which case a referral must be made to Children's Social Care and the police if it is appropriate. The rationale for this decision should be recorded by the DSL
2. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement before making a referral to Children's Social Care. However, in accordance with DfE guidance, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk or could impact a police investigation. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with Children's Social Care or the police whether the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. The child's views should also be taken into account.
3. If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm the DSL (or Deputy) must contact Children's Social Care via the Inter-Agency Referral Form (IARF) making a clear statement of:
 - the known facts
 - any suspicions or allegations
 - whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family

If there is indication that the child is suffering significant harm, a call will also be made to Children's Reception Team (CRT) on 01329 225379.

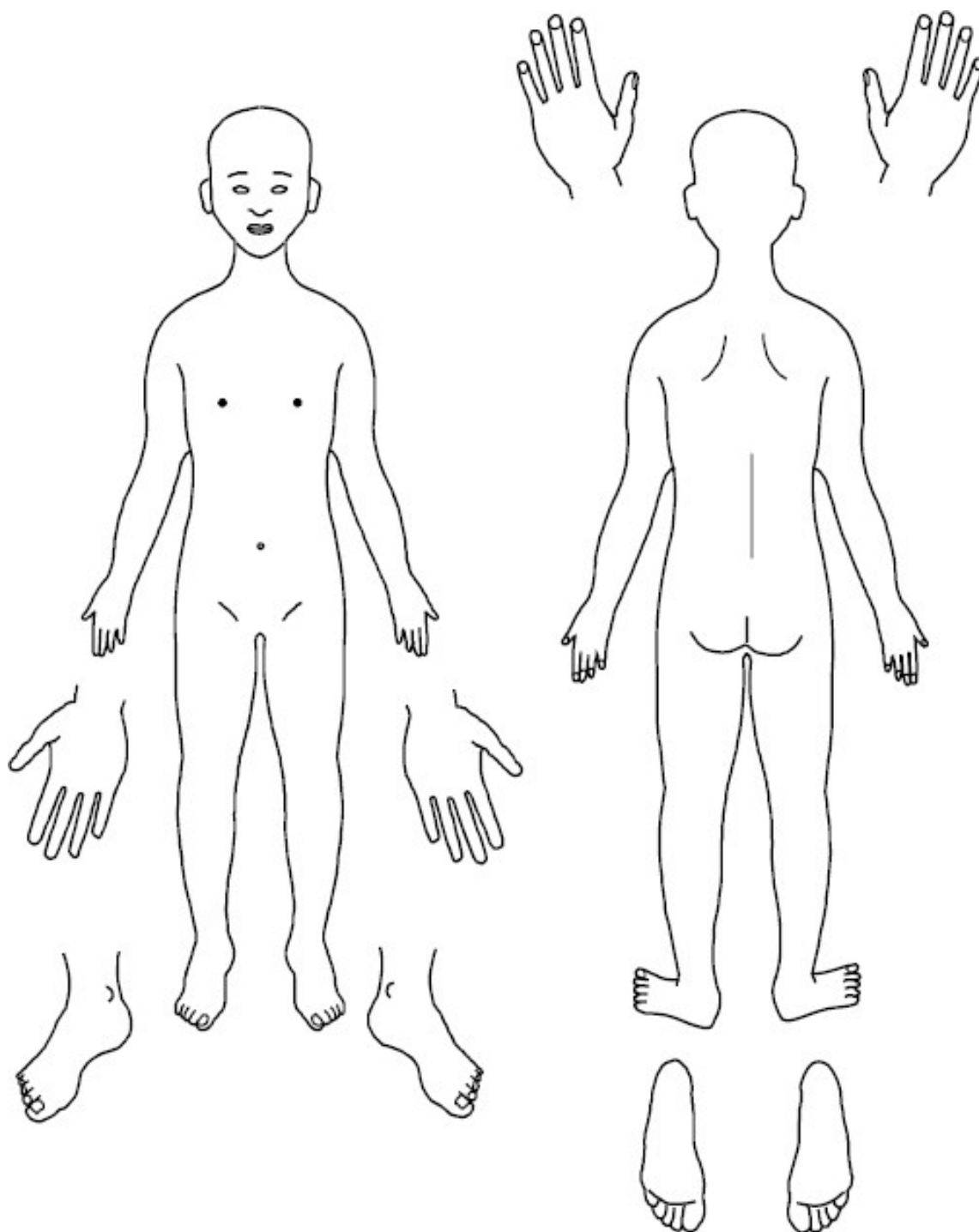
4. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police must be called. The DSL must then notify Children's Social Care of the occurrence and what action has been taken
5. When a pupil needs *urgent* medical attention and there is suspicion of parental abuse causing the medical need, the DSL or their Deputy should take the child to the accident and emergency unit at the nearest hospital, while Children's Social Care are informed. Advice should be sought from Children's Social Care about informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention.
6. If there is not a risk of significant harm, the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or consider the Early Help process but in both cases ensure that this is logged through the submission of an Inter-Agency Referral Form (IARF). The IARF can be accessed at the following link
https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en

Flowchart for child protection procedures



** In the cases of known FGM, the teacher who was made aware will also make contact with the police*

Skin map – to be used if CPOMS is unavailable



Name of Child: _____

Date of birth: _____ Date of recording: _____

Name of completer: _____



Any additional information:

Dealing with disclosures**All staff should:**

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 DSL is and who to approach if the DSL is unavailable. 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 school 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 by recording on CPOMS. If you feel the pupil is at significant risk then you should also speak with the DSL directly.
- 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
- If you are dissatisfied with the level of response you receive following your concerns, you should press for re-consideration

Record

- If possible make some very brief notes at the time, and write them up as soon as possible, adding to CPOMS
- 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 on CPOMS (or Annex 3 if CPOMS is unavailable) 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 (led by DSL)

- 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?

What happens next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are. The member of staff should be informed by the DSL what has happened following the report being made. If they do not receive this information they should be proactive in seeking it out.

If a staff member believes that their concerns have not been referred on or that the child remains at risk, they should initially ask the DSL to reconsider ensuring that the risks are understood. If this does not result in a satisfactory outcome, or the DSL rational appears to miss the risk to the child, then the Whistleblowing procedures of the school should be followed. If the DSL is unhappy with the response from Children Social Care, they should consider following the HSCP escalation protocol.

Receiving a disclosure can be upsetting for the member of staff and schools should have a procedure for supporting them after the disclosure. This might include reassurance that they have followed procedure correctly and that their swift actions will enable the allegations to be handled appropriately. For some staff, use of an employee-based counselling service may be appropriate.

Allegations against adults who work with children

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) states that organisations should have clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Those policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a complaint or a concern about the quality of care or practice.

Allegations as defined by KCSiE should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer. Complaints or concerns can be managed independently by the school or college under internal procedures, specifically the low level concerns policy 2021 (Annex 10)

Complaints could include:-

- Breaches of the code of Conduct
- Failure to follow policy, procedure or guidance
- Any breach of data protection or confidentiality
- Poor behaviour management
- Inappropriate use of social media
- Misadministration of medication

Concerns could include:-

- Inappropriate use of language, shouting or swearing
- Discussing personal or sexual relationships with, or in the presence, of pupils
- Making (or encouraging others to make) unprofessional comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate children, or might be interpreted as such.

Allegations Procedure

This procedure should be used in all cases in which it is alleged a member of staff or volunteer in a school, or another adult 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; or**
- **behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children**

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Headteacher as soon as possible
- If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the concerns need to be raised with the Chair of Trustees as soon as possible. If the Chair of Trustees is not available, then the LADO should be contacted directly.
- There may be situations when the Headteacher or Chair of Trustees will want to involve the police immediately if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

- Once an allegation has been received by the Headteacher or Chair of Trustees they will contact the LADO on 01962 876364 or child.protection@hants.gov.uk as soon as possible and before carrying out any investigation into the allegation other than preliminary enquiries.
- Inform the parents of the allegation unless there is a good reason not to
- For allegations against an individual or organisation outside of the school (community groups/sports teams etc) then staff should follow normal school procedures for reporting, including contacting the LADO.

In liaison with the LADO, the school will determine how to proceed and if necessary the LADO will refer the matter to Children's Social Care and/or the police.

If the matter is investigated internally, the LADO will advise the school to seek guidance from their personnel/HR provider in following procedures set out in chapter 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021) and the HSCP procedures.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Child on Child Abuse

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. Sexual violence can include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.

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.

Policy

At Perins School we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and this will be dealt with under our child protection policy and in line with KCSiE (2024)

We are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

Harmful behaviours at the lower end of the gendered violence continuum will be addressed immediately by staff, sending a message to all students that the type of behaviour is not acceptable at Perins or in society as a whole. Staff at Perins will address these behaviours (including gender bias and stereotype) in an effort to prevent escalation into sexual behaviours towards the higher end of the continuum and address the 'rape culture' prevalent in society today.

Perins school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and it will never be passed off as 'just banter', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

We recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

We will minimise the risk of Child on Child abuse by:-

Prevention:

- Taking a whole school approach to safeguarding & child protection
- Providing training to staff
- Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence based content delivered through the curriculum.
- Engaging with specialist support and interventions.
- All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- All staff will respond appropriately to all concerns including those outside of the school and online
- Staff should be aware that sexual violence and harassment can take place in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Staff should be aware that children can abuse their peers online through; Abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages, Non -consensual sharing of indecent nude and semi-nude images and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those that do not want to receive such content.
- Staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. If they don't, it can create an unsafe environment and lead to a culture where that normalises abuse and is pro-rape.
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of child-on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Children making a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, kept safe and be well supported.
- Where a child has been involved in the sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes (sexting), the school will work with the child(ren), their parents/carers and external agencies as appropriate, in order to protect all those involved from continued abuse and make every effort to ensure that any images are deleted from electronic devices.
- If the report includes an online element staff will be mindful of the Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools (DfE 2022) guidance.
- Staff taking the report will inform the DSL or their Deputy as soon as practicably possible but at least within 24 hours.
- Cpoms reports of this nature will categorise as 'Child on Child abuse' and 'concerning behaviour of a sexual nature'
- Staff taking a report will never promise confidentiality.
- Parents or carers will normally be informed (unless this would put the child at greater risk).
- If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care (01329 225379).

Risk Assessment:-

Following a report the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment on a case-by-case basis.

The Risk assessment will consider;

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator, their support needs and any discipline action.
- All other children at the school.
- The victim and the alleged perpetrator sharing classes and space at school.

The risk assessment will be recorded and kept under review.

Where there has been other professional intervention and/or other specialist risk assessments, these professional assessments will be used to inform the school's approach to supporting and protecting pupils.

Action: The DSL will consider:-

- The wishes of the victim.
- The nature of the incident including whether a crime has been committed and the harm caused.
- Ages of the children involved.
- Developmental stages of the children.
- Any power imbalance between the children.
- Any previous incidents.
- Ongoing risks.
- Other related issues or wider context.

Options: The DSL will manage the report with the following options:-

- Manage internally
- Early Help
- Refer to Childrens Social Care
- Report to the police (generally in parallel with a referral to Social Care)

Ongoing Response:

- The DSL will manage each report on a case-by-case basis and will keep the risk assessment under review.
- Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- The DSL will consider how best to keep the victim and perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport where appropriate.
- Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school will take suitable action. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in Perins School would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).
- Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school or college will, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in

light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school or college, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school and college premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and other witnesses (children& adults) will receive appropriate support and safeguards on a case-by-case basis. This could include counselling, intensive pastoral support and logistical/timetable changes.
- The school will take any disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator in line with behaviour and discipline in schools.
- The school recognises that taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions and will occur at the same time if necessary.

Physical Abuse

While a clear focus of child-on-child abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive.

These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, will be reported to the police.

The principles from the anti-bullying policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority.

References: –

KCSiE (DfE 2024)

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE 2021)

Annex 7

Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool

As advised, this tool is only to be used by appropriately trained staff. The DSL will be trained through the HSCP and updated at least every 2 years.

Behaviours: age 9 to 13

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

What is a green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

Green behaviours 5-9

- feeling and touching own genitals
- curiosity about other children's genitals
- curiosity about sex and relationships, e.g. differences between boys and girls, how sex happens, where babies come from, same-sex relationships
- sense of privacy about bodies
- telling stories or asking questions using swear and slang words for parts of the body

Green behaviours 9-13

- solitary masturbation
- use of sexual language including swear and slang words
- having girl/boyfriends who are of the same, opposite or any gender
- interest in popular culture, e.g. fashion, music, media, online games, chatting online
- need for privacy
- consensual kissing, hugging, holding hands with peers

What is an amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

Amber behaviours 5-9

- questions about sexual activity which persist or are repeated frequently, despite an answer having been given
- sexual bullying face to face or through texts or online messaging
- engaging in mutual masturbation
- persistent sexual images and ideas in talk, play and art
- use of adult slang language to discuss sex

Amber behaviours 9-13

- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- verbal, physical or cyber/virtual sexual bullying involving sexual aggression
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) targeted bullying
- exhibitionism, e.g. flashing or mooning
- giving out contact details online
- viewing pornographic material
- worrying about being pregnant or having STIs

What is a red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental, or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red behaviours 5-9

- frequent masturbation in front of others
- sexual behaviour engaging significantly younger or less able children
- forcing other children to take part in sexual activities
- simulation of oral or penetrative sex
- sourcing pornographic material online

Red behaviours 9-13

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- distributing naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- sexually explicit talk with younger children
- sexual harassment
- arranging to meet with an online acquaintance in secret
- genital injury to self or others
- forcing other children of same age, younger or less able to take part in sexual activities
- sexual activity e.g. oral sex or intercourse
- presence of sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- evidence of pregnancy

Behaviours: age 13 to 17

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

What is a green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

Green behaviours

- solitary masturbation
- sexually explicit conversations with peers
- obscenities and jokes within the current cultural norm
- interest in erotica/pornography
- use of internet/e-media to chat online
- having sexual or non-sexual relationships
- sexual activity including hugging, kissing, holding hands
- consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of similar age and developmental ability
- choosing not to be sexually active

What is an amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

Amber behaviours

- accessing exploitative or violent pornography
- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress,
- withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- concern about body image
- taking and sending naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- single occurrence of peeping, exposing, mooning or obscene gestures
- giving out contact details online
- joining adult- only social networking sites and giving false personal information
- arranging a face to face meeting with an online contact alone

What is a red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental, or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red behaviours

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- preoccupation with sex, which interferes with daily function
- sexual degradation/humiliation of self or others
- attempting/forcing others to expose genitals
- sexually aggressive/exploitative behaviour
- sexually explicit talk with younger children
- sexual harassment
- non-consensual sexual activity
- use of/acceptance of power and control in sexual relationships
- genital injury to self or others
- sexual contact with others where there
- is a big difference in age or ability
- sexual activity with someone in authority and in a position of trust
- sexual activity with family members
- involvement in sexual exploitation and/or trafficking
- sexual contact with animals
- receipt of gifts or money in exchange for sex

This is intended to be used as a guide only. Please refer to the guidance tool at <https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool> for further information

Print date: 01/10/2015 - Brook has taken every care to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate and up-to-date at the time of being published. As information and knowledge is constantly changing, readers are strongly advised to use this information for up to one month from print date. Brook accepts no responsibility for difficulties that may arise as a result of an individual acting on the advice and recommendations it contains.

Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool adapted from Family Planning Queensland. (2012). Traffic Lights guide to sexual behaviours. Brisbane: Family Planning Queensland, Australia.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children Risk and Needs Assessment Template
(This template is the basis for an electronic form used by the designated safeguarding lead which can be accessed [here](#))

Brook Traffic Light Assessment	What are the risks? Who might be harmed & how?	Action	Action by Who?	Action by when?	Action status or Date Completed & Outcome including further actions
Red Behaviour:					
Red Behaviour:					
Amber Behaviour:					

Whistleblowing in a safeguarding context

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

This does not replace the whistle blowing policy and should be read in conjunction with the school policy.

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 **Perins School** school, the Head teacher **Steve Jones** is the senior manager and responsible for all staff. If you are concerned that any member of staff within the school is not following safeguarding processes or behaving in a way that is placing children at risk, you should in the first place make the head teacher aware.

If your concern is about the head teacher then you would raise this with the Chair of Trustees.

If you would prefer to raise your concerns outside of the school 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 Hampshire County Council.

If you believe that a member of the school staff is harming a child (an allegation) and this has been reported to the Headteacher and no action has been taken, or the member of staff you have concerns about is the Headteacher, then you are able to contact the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs) on 01962 876364 or child.protection@hants.gov.uk

If you believe that a child is being abused by individuals outside of the school, then you are able to make a referral to Childrens Social Care by calling 0300 555 1384 (office hours) or 0300 555 1373 (outside of office hours)

Low Level Concerns Policy

The Perins MAT
October 2021

1. Policy statement

The Perins Multi Academy Trust (The MAT) recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities.

The MAT works to ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

2. Scope

All employees employed at this school including:

- Teachers
- Support staff
- Supply teachers
- Volunteers
- Local Authority visiting staff
- Contractors

The term 'staff' throughout this policy refers to all of the above.

3. Policy aims

To help create a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person and are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

To enable schools to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early.

To minimise the risk of abuse occurring.

To ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

To help create an environment where staff are comfortable to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

4. Definition

The term 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm threshold for an allegation.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' defines a low level concern as:

"any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- *is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work;*
- *and*
- *does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO"*

5. Avoiding low level concerning behaviour

Behaviour defined as a 'low level concern' can exist on a spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate but is not in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Staff education and reinforcement on avoiding circumstances which may put them in a difficult situation is key to avoiding the need for dealing with these types of concerns.

The MAT ensures that staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is through their induction and regularly reinforcement of documents such as:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- 'Avoiding Allegations' guidance
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and regular training
- Teachers' Standards (for teaching staff)

6. Reporting a low-level concern

Low level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the Head of School as per the school's Child Protection procedures. If the concern is about the Head of School, this should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

Low level concerns about supply staff, contractors and local authority visiting staff will also be reported to their employers.

7. Dealing with a low level concern

Where a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff, this information must be recorded and passed to the Head of School.

The Head of School must then make an assessment to determine if the matter is a 'low level concern' or an 'allegation' and follow one of the following routes.

- Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred to the LADO for advice.
- Low level concerns that the school feel may need further guidance on will be referred to the LADO for advice.
- Low level concerns that the school feel they can deal with internally will be dealt with via the school's usual child protection investigation process.

The school will engage with its HR provider where it is necessary to undertake further investigation and/or deal with the concern under relevant processes.

8. Recording a low level concern

All low level concerns should be formally recorded by a member of staff when they are made aware of them. This record should then be passed to the Head of School (or Chair of Trustees if the concern is about the Head of School).

The record should include:

- Details of the concern,
- The context in which the concern arose,
- The outcome of the investigation and any action taken, and
- The name of the individual sharing their concerns (if known) (unless the individual wishes to remain anonymous which must be respected as far as possible).

Relevant records will be retained confidentially on the personnel file. A separate record will also be kept of low level concerns to more easily identify patterns that may involve more than one member of staff. All records must be kept in line with data protection principles.

9. Reviewing a low level concern

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the Head of School will decide on a course of action, which may include:

- Disciplinary investigation and/or proceedings
- Management Advice, including recommendations for training
- Referral to the LADO (where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold).

The school will take advice, where appropriate, from their HR provider in respect of low level concerns.

The school will also review appropriate policies and training, or other wider cultural issues in the school, to see whether anything needs to be done to minimise the risk of similar behaviour happening again.

Relevant records will be retained confidentially on the personnel file. A separate record will also be kept of low level concerns to more easily identify patterns that may involve more than one member of staff. All records must be kept in line with data protection principles.

Low level concerns will not be included in a reference unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference (e.g. misconduct or poor performance). Low level concerns which relate solely to safeguarding will not be included in a reference, subject to paragraph 10.2.

A low level concern (or group or pattern of concerns) which has met the harm threshold and has therefore been referred to the LADO may be included in a reference depending on the circumstances.

Briefing sheet for temporary and supply staff

For supply staff and those on short contracts in Perins School

While working in Perins school, you have a duty of care towards the children/pupils here. This means that at all times you should act in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

In addition, if at any time you have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if you think they may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the school designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who is Alexei Western, Deputy Head teacher. The deputy DSLs are Fern Calver (Guidance Manager), Fiona Stone (Guidance Manager), Matt Jackson (Guidance Manager), Mark Nevola (Deputy Head), Amy Craig (Assistant Head) and Clive Surry (Business Manager)

This is not an exhaustive list but you may have become concerned as a result of:

- Observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental.
- Observing something in the appearance of a child or young person which suggests they are not being sufficiently well cared for.
- Observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about a child or young person.
- a child or young person telling you that they have been subjected to some form of abuse.

In any of the circumstances listed here, you must write down what you saw or heard, date and sign your account, and give it to the DSL as soon as possible and no longer than 24 hours later. This may be the beginning of a legal process – it is important to understand that legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in any way.

If a child talks to you about abuse, you should follow these guidelines:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than they wish.
- Make it clear that you may need to pass on information to staff in other agencies who may be able to help – do not promise confidentiality. You are obliged to share any information relating to abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Write an account of the conversation immediately, as close to verbatim as possible. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it, and give your record to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who should contact Children's Social Care if appropriate.

Remember, if you have a concern, report it to the DSL.

What is child abuse?

The following definitions are taken from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* HM Government (2023). In addition to these definitions, it should be understood that children can also be abused by being criminally and/or sexually exploited, honour-based abuse, forced marriage or female genital mutilation. To support the local context, all staff have access to the Hampshire safeguarding children partnership (HSCP) threshold chart.

What is abuse, neglect and exploitation?

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Exploitation can include instances where a child or young person may be groomed to become involved in sexual or criminal activity.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

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

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological

needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The HSCP neglect strategy is used to provide a more detailed summary of neglect and the local thresholds for referrals.

Indicators of abuse

Neglect

The nature of neglect

Neglect is a lack of parental care but poverty and lack of information or adequate services can be contributory factors.

Far more children are registered to the category of neglect on child protection plans than to the other categories. As with abuse, the number of children experiencing neglect is likely to be much higher than the numbers on the plans.

Neglect can include parents or carers failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision or stimulation
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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.

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 HSCP 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
- Self Harm

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
- Destructive tendencies
- Poor mental health

Emotional abuse

The nature of emotional abuse

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.

All kinds of abuse and neglect have emotional effects although emotional abuse can occur by itself.

Children can be harmed by witnessing someone harming another person – as in domestic violence.

It is sometimes possible to spot emotionally abusive behavior from parents and carers 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.

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
- Other indicators of poor mental health
- 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

Physical abuse

The nature of physical abuse

Most children collect cuts and bruises quite routinely as part of the rough and tumble of daily life. Clearly, it is not necessary to be concerned about most of these minor injuries. But accidental injuries normally occur on the *bony prominences* – e.g., shins. Injuries on

the *soft* areas of the body are more likely to be inflicted intentionally and should therefore make us more alert to other concerning factors that may be present.

A body map (annex 3) can assist in the clear recording and reporting of physical abuse. The body map should only be used to record observed injuries and no child should be asked to remove clothing by a member of staff of the school.

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.
- Poor mental health

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's 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.

Sexual abuse

The nature of sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is often perpetrated by people who are known and trusted by the child – e.g., relatives, family friends, neighbours, babysitters, people working with the child in school, faith settings, clubs or activities. Children can also be subject to child sexual

exploitation CSE. We have outlined indicators of CCE and CSE (page 33) given the rise in these criminal activities on a local and national level.

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
- Poor mental health
- 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
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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. CCE can include vehicle crime and threatening/committing serious violence.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see page 20 for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Children may become trapped as they or their families are threatened with violence and they may be coerced or entrapped into debt or into carrying weapons. They may carry weapons as a form of protection.

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, regularly come home late or are absent from school
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child 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. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

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.

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 Mechanism¹⁵ 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.

Useful contacts

Key Personnel	Name (s)	Telephone No.
DSL	Alexei Western (Deputy Head)	western@perins.hants.sch.uk 01962 734361 07496032071
Deputy DSL(s)	Fern Calver (Guidance Manager) Fiona Stone (Guidance Manager) Matt Jackson (Guidance Manager) Amy Craig (Assistant Headteacher) Mark Nevola (Head of School) Clive Surry (Chief Operations Officer)	calver@perins.hants.sch.uk stone@perins.hants.sch.uk mjackson@perins.hants.sch.uk craig@perins.hants.sch.uk nevola@perins.hants.sch.uk surry@perins.hants.sch.uk
School's named "Prevent" lead	Steve Jones (Executive HT) Alexei Western (Deputy Head)	sjones@perins.hants.sch.uk western@perins.hants.sch.uk
Chair of Trustees	Katy Toms	ktoms@perins.hants.sch.uk
Nominated Safeguarding Trustee	Charlie Hammel	chammel@theperinsmat.org
Children's Reception Team	MASH	01329 225379
Out of hours social care		0300 555 1373
Police		101 or in emergencies 999
Safeguarding advisors / Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs)	LADO	HCC Safeguarding Unit 01962 876364
School nurse		02380 453593
Early Help Hub	Professionals Helpline	0300 555 1384
Childline		0800 1111
NSPCC		0808 800 5000