



**Stowe School**

**Safeguarding and Child  
Protection Policy 2023-24**

**Revised June 2023**

This policy was adopted on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023

(Approval given by the Chair of Governors: Simon Creedy Smith and Nominated Safeguarding Governor: Rebecca Brown June 2023)

The policy is to be reviewed by 1 August 2024

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## 1. Contacts

### 1.1 School contacts

<b>Head</b>	Anthony Wallersteiner  01280 818240
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b>	Michael Rickner  01280 818108 / 07467 949767 <a href="mailto:Mrickner@stowe.co.uk">Mrickner@stowe.co.uk</a>
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Richard Corthine 01280 818243 / 07789 276003 <a href="mailto:Rcorthine@stowe.co.uk">Rcorthine@stowe.co.uk</a>  Jenny Tompkins 07770 380847 <a href="mailto:Jtompkins@stowe.co.uk">Jtompkins@stowe.co.uk</a>  Fran Shah 07887 558692 <a href="mailto:Fshah@stowe.co.uk">Fshah@stowe.co.uk</a>
<b>Nominated Safeguarding Governor</b>	Ms. Rebecca Brown  01280 818240
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Simon Creedy Smith  01280 818240

## 1.2 Contacts in County

<b>Education Safeguarding Advisory Service</b> ESAS offers support to education providers to assist them to deliver effectively on all aspects of their safeguarding responsibilities.	01296 382912
<b>First Response Team (including Early Help, Channel)</b> The First Response Team process all new referrals to social care, including children with disabilities. Referrals are assessed by the team to check the seriousness and urgency of the concerns and whether Section 17 and/or Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 apply. The First Response Team will ensure that the referral reaches the appropriate team for assistance in a quick and efficient manner.	01296 383962  Out of hours 0800 999 7677
<b>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</b> The Buckinghamshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for overseeing the management of all allegations against people in a position of trust who work with children in Buckinghamshire on either a paid or voluntary basis	01296 382070
<a href="#">Bucks Family Information Service</a> Information for families on a range of issues including childcare, finances, parenting and education	01296 383065
<a href="#">Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership</a> (BSCP) Procedures, policies and practice guidelines	
<a href="#">Schools Web</a> School bulletin, Safeguarding links, A-Z guide to information and services	
<b>BCC Equalities &amp; School Improvement Manager</b>	01296 382461
<b>BCC Prevent Co-ordinator</b>	01296 674784
<b>Thames Valley Police</b>	101 (999 in case of emergency)

### 1.3 Other contacts

NSPCC <a href="#">NSPCC</a>	0800 800 5000
Childline <a href="#">Childline</a>	0800 11 11
Kidscape – Parent Advice Line (bullying) (Mon-Weds from 9:30am to 2:30pm) <a href="#">Kidscape</a>	020 7823 5430
Female Genital Mutilation Helpline (NSPCC) <a href="#">NSPCC FGM Helpline</a>	0800 028 3550 <a href="mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk">fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk</a>
Samaritans - Helpline <a href="#">Samaritans</a>	116 123
Forced Marriages Unit - Foreign and Commonwealth Office <a href="#">Forced marriage - GOV.UK</a>	020 7008 0151 <a href="mailto:fmufco.gov.uk">fmufco.gov.uk</a>
Crimestoppers <a href="#">Crimestoppers</a>	0800 555 111
R-U Safe? Barnardos - Children/Young People Sexual Exploitation Service <a href="#">Barnardos RUSafe Bucks</a>	01494 785 552
<a href="#">CEOP</a> (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)	

**1.4** This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies on the Stowe Central and website and other policies you feel it would be useful to refer to:

- Anti-bullying
- Child on Child Abuse
  - Attendance
  - Discipline and Behaviour
  - Looked After Children
  - Equalities
  - SEN/Inclusion
  - Health & Safety (including managing children with medical needs)
  - Photography
  - Digital-Safety (including use of social media)
  - Colleagues Code of Conduct
  - PSHE - to include RSE
  - Visitors
  - Whistleblowing
  - Safer Recruitment
  - Mobile Phone
  - Self-Harm
  - Confidentiality Policy
  - Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy

## **2. Introduction**

- 2.1.** At Stowe, we believe that a policy on child protection is founded on the right of all children and people to be and to feel safe and that there is the fundamental obligation on all schools to robustly secure this right.

The aim of this policy is to provide colleagues, governors and volunteers with the framework they need to keep children in Stowe safe and secure and to provide parents and carers with the information about how we will safeguard their children and promote the child's welfare, whilst in our care.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centered. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the **Children Acts 1989 and 2004** and the **Education Act 2002**; and in line with the following:

- ☐ "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" - July 2018 [Working Together To Safeguard Children July 2018](#)
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- “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023”- statutory guidance for schools and further education colleges [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1156109/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023.pdf)
- ☐ Information Sharing Guidance for Safeguarding Practitioners [Information Sharing Guidance](#) – DfE July 2018
- ☐ Children Missing Education; Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities - Sept 2016 [Children missing education - GOV.UK](#)
- ☐ Statutory Guidance issued under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act - 2015 [Prevent Duty Guidance](#)
- ☐ Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges – September 2022 [Sexual violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges](#)
- ☐ The Equality Act - 2010 [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)
- ☐ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- ☐ What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused - March 2015 [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#)
- ☐ Human Rights Act – 1998 [Human Rights Act](#)

**2.2.** We believe clear governance and leadership is central to embedding a safeguarding culture. The Governing Body takes its responsibility seriously under **section 175 of the Education Act 2002** (section 157 for independent academies and free schools) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; working together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm or whose welfare may be in question. Governors will ensure all colleagues at the school have read and understood their responsibilities pertaining to **Part 1, Part 5 and Annexe A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2023**. They must ensure that there is an auditable system in place to ~~embed~~ this.

**2.3.** All colleagues are required to read and adhere to the **Colleagues Code of Conduct 2023** which governs behaviours expected of them, as well as having an understanding of the **Pupil Code of Conduct** for children and our **Attendance Policy**.

**2.4.** We recognise all colleagues and Governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, actively promoting their welfare and ensuring that every child’s welfare is our paramount concern. Each colleague is responsible for contributing to a positive culture of safeguarding in Stowe.

**2.5.** All colleagues believe our School must provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual children.

**2.6.** The School recognises that as well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation outside of their homes and from other children. Colleagues must remain vigilant and alert to these potential risks.

**2.7.** The aims of this policy are:

**2.7.1.** To support pupil development in ways which will foster security, confidence and resilience, free from discrimination.

**2.7.2.** To provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected.

**2.7.3.** Children feel confident that they know how to approach adults if they are experiencing difficulties.

**2.7.4.** To ensure all teaching colleagues, non-teaching colleagues and volunteers:

- are aware of the need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children
- identify the need for support early to promote well-being
- promptly report cases of actual or suspected abuse, in line with guidance from the Buckinghamshire Threshold Document
- are trained to recognise signs and indicators of potential abuse
- To prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- To protect children from maltreatment
- To ensure children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and;
- Take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**2.7.5.** To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known to be or thought to be at risk of harm and ensure contribution to assessments of need and support plans for those children.

**2.7.6.** To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication, ensuring colleagues know how and when to share information to protect children in a way that is legal, ethical and timely.

**2.7.7.** To ensure Stowe has a clear system for communicating concerns and a model for open communication between children, teachers, parents/carers and other adults working with children.

**2.7.8.** To have a clearly understood structured procedure within the school which will, in cases of suspected abuse, be promptly followed by all members of the school community.

**2.7.9.** To ensure the school has robust systems in place, accurately to record safeguarding and child protection concerns, which are clearly understood by colleagues and adhered to. Actions taken to address concerns and outcomes achieved are dealt with in a timely manner, clearly and accurately recorded. These records are securely stored.

**2.7.10.** To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding, supporting the needs of children at our school.

**2.7.11.** To ensure that all colleagues appointed have been through the safer recruitment process and understand the principles of safer working practices as set out in our **Colleagues Code of Conduct 2023** which stipulates their duty to report where behaviours of colleagues may have stepped outside of agreed safe practices. All colleagues must work to develop a positive culture of safeguarding in our school.

**2.7.12.** To provide clarity to other community users of our facilities with regard to our expectations of how they should maintain a safe environment, which supports children's welfare and development. We reserve the right to decline access to use the school facilities where we believe their ethos or practice is not aligned with this policy.

**2.7.13.** This Child Protection policy is published on the school's website under Parents' Hub – Rules and Policies and hard copies are available from the Head's office and/or the DSL.



### 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. All colleagues, visitors and volunteers understand safeguarding children is **everyone's responsibility** and that they must be diligent to help secure children's safety and wellbeing. Any person who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred will report it immediately to **Michael Rickner** (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or, in his absence, to **Richard Corthine, Fran Shah and Jenny Tompkins** (Deputy DSLs). In the absence of any of the above, concerns will be brought to the attention of the most senior colleague on site. Colleagues understand that if there is an immediate risk of harm then the police or First Response will be called directly and the DSL will be updated at the earliest opportunity (see the referral procedure in sections 4 and 7, and allegations against colleagues in section 9).
- 3.2. Colleagues must maintain a good working knowledge of the [Buckinghamshire Threshold Document](#) (posters around the Houses and the School) and any updates, how it can be used to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of pupils and how it should be used to inform decision making regarding a referral to First Response as soon as there is a significant concern.
- 3.3. Colleagues understand that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and that previously looked after children remain vulnerable. Colleagues have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep both looked after children and previously looked after children safe.
- 3.4. Colleagues understand increased vulnerability and that barriers exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.
- 3.5. The Governing Body and ELT should take a proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary colleagues, volunteers and contractors. The DSL will share information about pupils on a need to know basis.
- 3.6. The Governing Body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities. It must:
  - 3.6.1. Ensure that the Head and (when not the Head) the DSL create and maintain a strong, positive culture of safeguarding within the school.
  - 3.6.2. Ensure that this policy reflects the unique features of the community we serve and the needs of the pupils attending our provision (see section 4). This will be reviewed at least annually in line with changes to guidance and legislation.
  - 3.6.3. Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this Child Protection Policy and be satisfied that it is being complied with.
  - 3.6.4. Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and has the required level of authority, and also appoint at least one Deputy DSL. The Head has overall responsibility for safeguarding within the school; they can be the DSL or can delegate that work to a member of the ELT. The DSL must report to the Head on a regular basis. The roles and responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL are made explicit in those post-holders' job descriptions.
  - 3.6.5. Recognise the importance of the role of the DSL, ensuring they have sufficient time, training, skills and resources to be effective. Refresher training must be attended every 2 years, in addition knowledge and skills must be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.
  - 3.6.6. Ensure measures are in place for the Stowe Governing Body to have oversight of how the School's delivery against its safeguarding responsibilities are exercised and evidenced. Ensure robust structures are in place to challenge the Head where there are any

identified gaps in practice or procedures are not followed.

- 3.6.7.** Recognise the vital contribution that the school can make in helping children to keep safe, through incorporation of safeguarding within the curriculum. This will also be taught through the PSHE curriculum and relevant issues through the Relationship Education (primary schools) or Relationship Sex Education (secondary schools, mandatory from Sept. 2022). Ensure that through curriculum content and delivery, children in the school understand, at age and stage appropriate levels, safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe in a contextually appropriate way.
- 3.6.8.** Ensure safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures are in place, which adhere to **Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023** and legislation referred to therein.
- 3.6.9.** Ensure resources are allocated, as a priority, to meet the needs of pupils requiring child protection or early intervention.
- 3.6.10.** Ensure the DSL completes a BSCP Annual Safeguarding Report for Governors, demonstrating how we are meeting our statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Ensure a copy of this report is shared with the Education Safeguarding Advisory Service within the specified time frame.
- 3.6.11.** To liaise with the Head to inform him of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).
- 3.7.** It is the duty of the Chair of Governors, Mr Simon Creedy Smith, to liaise with relevant agencies if any allegations are made against the Head. If there are concerns that issues are not being progressed in an expedient manner, colleagues/pupils/parents/carers should escalate concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via First Response.
- 3.8.** The Governing Body must ensure that a named teacher is designated (Mike Rickner) for Children Looked After and that an up to date list of children who are subject to a Care Order or are accommodated by the County Council, is regularly reviewed and updated. The school must work with the Virtual Schools Team to support the educational attainment for those children who are Looked After.
- 3.9.** The Governing Body has a statutory duty to appoint a Nominated Governor for Child Protection (Rebecca Brown). The Nominated Governor must be familiar with [Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) procedures, Local Authority procedures and guidance issued by the Department for Education.

The Nominated Governor must:

- 3.9.1.** Work with the DSL to produce the Child Protection Policy annually.
- 3.9.2.** Undertake appropriate safeguarding training, to include Prevent Training.
- 3.9.3.** Ensure child protection is, as a minimum, an annual agenda item for the Governing Body.
- 3.9.4.** Meet at least termly with the DSL to review and monitor the School's delivery on its safeguarding responsibilities and to review the Single Central Record.
- 3.10.** All Governors must complete safeguarding training on appointment, also to include Prevent training. Stowe School will ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge

to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in Stowe are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

**3.11.** Overall responsibility for the safeguarding of pupils remains with the Head, although tasks may be delegated to other members of the team, including the nominated DSL if appropriate. We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is responsible for:

**3.11.1.** Creating a culture of safeguarding within the school, where children are protected from harm. Ensuring all colleagues receive an appropriate level of induction and training to support them to be professionally curious and vigilant in order to question behaviours and challenge perceptions if they have concerns for a pupil.

**3.11.2.** Ensuring children receive the right help at the right time using the Buckinghamshire Threshold Document to inform plans for support or protection (see Appendix for definitions of the categories of abuse).

**3.11.3.** Ensuring referrals to partner agencies are followed up in writing, within 24 hours of initial contact, including referrals to First Response.

**3.11.4.** Establishing and embedding a policy and process for recording and storing information about child protection concerns and outcomes achieved, enabling records to be reviewed and an overview gained, in order to support timely interventions and allow prompt follow up. This includes use of the Escalation Process found on the BSCP website.

**3.11.5.** Ensuring safeguarding records, legislation and guidance are up to date and are maintained in accordance with data protection. Ensuring records are stored safely and securely and remain confidential. That:

- the DSL must share information, both internally and externally, on a 'need to know' basis only, being able to justify the reason for sharing and in accordance with the confidentiality policy.
- all child protection files are held separately from pupil educational records.

**3.11.6.** Maintaining the record of colleagues' safeguarding training. Ensuring that Stowe's most up to date **Child Protection Policy** is widely available (this may be on the website), publishing the **Safeguarding Statement** and other relevant information on the school website. Ensuring that the safeguarding team contact details and photos are displayed in prominent areas around the school and also on the website.

**3.11.7.** Being the designated point of contact for colleagues to be able to discuss and share their concerns, developing a culture whereby colleagues feel comfortable to do so. In their absence the DSL will ensure the Deputy DSL, or most senior colleague, is available (The DSL and the Deputy are both trained to the same level within our school).

**3.11.8.** Being available to colleagues and outside agencies during school hours and term time for consultation on safeguarding concerns raised. Having responsibility to ensure that cover is arranged outside of term-time during working hours.

**3.11.9.** During residential and extended school hours, ensuring arrangements are in place for colleagues to have a point of contact.

**3.11.10.** Contributing effectively to multi-agency working, for the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children, this could include:

- participating in Strategy discussions;

- attending Child Protection Case Conferences;
- submitting reports to the conference which must be shared in advance with the parents/carers;
- contributing effectively and taking shared responsibility for core group meetings with all other agencies involved;
- engaging fully, as requested, in any other multi-agency planning meetings;
- contributing to the Framework for Assessments process;
- ensuring coverage is available at all times during the year.

**3.11.11.** Providing the Head (if the Head is not the DSL), with an annual report for the Governing Body, detailing how school delivers on its safeguarding responsibilities and any child protection issues within the school. The Governing Body will use this report to fulfil its responsibility to provide the Local Authority with information about their safeguarding policies and procedures.

**3.11.12.** Meeting regularly (at least once a term) with the Nominated Governor, help with strategic leadership responsibility for their school's or college's safeguarding arrangements and to share oversight of the safeguarding provision within the setting, monitor performance and develop plans to rectify any gaps in policy or procedure.

**3.11.13.** Meeting the statutory requirement to keep up to date with knowledge, enabling them to fulfil their role, including attending mandatory and any other additional relevant training.

**3.11.14.** Referring immediately to the Police any cases where a criminal offence may have been committed or risk of harm is imminent.

### **3.10.15 Training for colleagues**

Stowe School ensures all colleagues complete safeguarding (including online-safety) and child protection training as part of their induction. The school also has a commitment to updating training for all colleagues each year and for appropriate colleagues to attend Local Authority and Inter-Agency Safeguarding Board Meetings.

To achieve this:

- Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs will receive relevant training every year.
- All colleagues and volunteers new to the school will be given appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction programme to the school. Updates will feature regularly in all colleagues and SLT meetings, as appropriate.
- All school colleagues and Governing Body members will undertake the training every year as organised by the DSL.
- Newly recruited colleagues will complete training as part of their induction and will receive school-specific training, including being made aware of local risk factors for extremism.
- The DSL will attend Local Authority and other training courses as necessary and other appropriate inter-agency training every year.

- The Head Teacher will attend advanced training with a designated provider.
- The relevant Executive Leadership Team, Pastoral Leaders, and the Governing Body will attend training with a designated provider.

## 4. Procedures

Our school procedures for all colleagues, volunteers and visitors in safeguarding and protecting children from harm are in line with Buckinghamshire County Council and [Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) safeguarding procedures, **“Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018”**, **“Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023”** and statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the **Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015**.

At Stowe we focus on the child, putting his / her interests at the heart of all we do in Safeguarding and Child Protection. We have children (boys and girls; Y9-Y13; day and boarding) from a variety of ethnic and international backgrounds. A colleague is specifically in charge of international pupils to help assess any educational and personal needs and we have robust pastoral policies and training for all colleagues to support our boarding and day pupils.

All colleagues are trained annually and more regularly in Safeguarding & Child Protection, ‘Prevent’ (extremism) and ‘Working together’ with our partner agencies and Bucks Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP)

We will ensure:

- 4.1** We have a designated member of the Executive Leadership Team who has undertaken appropriate training for the role, as recommended by the BSCP. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be required to update their training in accordance with the Learning Pathway agreed by the BSCP.
- 4.2** We have three colleagues (Deputy Safeguarding Leads) who will act in the DSL’s absence and who has also received training for the role of DSL. In the absence of an appropriately trained colleague, the most senior colleague on site will assume this role.
- 4.3** All adults (including supply teachers and volunteers) new to our school are made aware of the School’s policy and procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the DSL, their role and responsibilities under **“Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023”** and the booklet **“What to do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused”**. They will have these explained, as part of their induction into the school.
- 4.4** All colleagues should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent colleagues from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that colleagues determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- 4.5** Visitors must be :
  - 4.5.1** Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
  - 4.5.2** Met and directed by school colleagues/representatives.
  - 4.5.3** Signed in and out of the School by school colleagues.
  - 4.5.4** Given a safeguarding leaflet to read and/or directed to a poster informing them of how

to report a concern.

**4.5.5** Given restricted access to specific areas only of the school, as appropriate.

**4.5.6** Escorted by a colleague/representative as required.

**4.5.7** Given access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.

**4.6** All colleagues must complete regular safeguarding training, attend regular refresher training and partake in any training opportunities arranged or delivered by the DSL. Updates must be cascaded to all colleagues throughout the year, at a minimum of once a year

**4.7** All parents/carers must be made aware of the school's responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures through this policy, which is available on our website. Hard copies are also available from the Head's Office or the DSL.

**4.8** All colleagues must follow the reporting procedures as follows when reporting any child protection concerns:

**4.8.1** Colleagues must ensure the child is in a safe place and in receipt of support;

**4.8.2** Colleagues must initially make a verbal report to the DSL to alert them to the safeguarding/child protection concern;

**4.8.3** Colleagues must make a written report using the school record keeping process. My Concern is to be used to report a concern;

**4.8.4** Colleagues must ensure the time and date of the incident is recorded;

**4.8.5** A factual account of the incident must be recorded, including who was involved, what was said/seen/heard, where the incident took place and any actual words or phrases used by the child. Always listen carefully and quietly. Do not press for any evidence at all. Remain calm and reassuring. Do not dismiss the disclosure and do not show distress or concern. Do not refute the allegation. Show that you care through open and reassuring facial expressions and body language. Do not interrogate or ask leading questions (it could later undermine a case);

**4.8.6** Use a body map to record any injuries seen or reported by the child;

**4.8.7** Colleagues must sign and date the report giving details of their role within school;

**4.8.8** The DSL must record when the report was passed to them and what action was taken alongside any outcomes achieved. Each child will have their own individual safeguarding/child protection record with a comprehensive summary of the concern, details of follow-up and resolution then any actions taken and the outcome for the child;

**4.8.9** All colleagues have been sent guidance as to how to note take when a disclosure/allegations are made.

**4.9** Through our **Attendance Policy and lesson registration**, we have a robust system for monitoring attendance. The school will act to address absenteeism with parents/carers and pupils promptly, identifying any safeguarding issues arising.

**4.10** All children attending our school are required to have a minimum of two identified emergency contacts.

- 4.11** Any pupil absent for ten school days, where it has not been possible to make contact with a parent/carer, will be reported as a Child Missing in Education (CME) using the **Buckinghamshire CME Protocol**. Stowe understands that children missing from education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign for a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation. The school will endeavor to identify the underlying issues for any absenteeism such as abuse at home or bullying from peers and address these concerns to prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.
- 4.12** Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important that Stowe's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing from education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing from education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.
- 4.13** Any absence, without satisfactory explanation, of a pupil currently subject to a child protection or child in need plan is immediately referred to their social worker.
- 4.14** Parents/carers must inform the school if there are any changes to a pupil's living arrangement. Stowe has a mandatory duty to inform the local authority, via the First Response Team, if a child under the age of 16 years old lives with someone other than their parent, step-parent, aunt, uncle or grandparent for a period of more than 28 days. This is defined as being a private fostering arrangement.
- 4.15** All colleagues, parents/carers and children are made aware of the school's escalation process, by contacting the Head or other members of ELT which can be activated in the event of concerns not being resolved after the first point of contact. We acknowledge an individual's safeguarding responsibility does not end once they have informed the DSL of any concerns, although specific details of further actions may be appropriately withheld by the DSL as information will only be shared on a need to know basis.
- 4.16** Our lettings policy reflects the ongoing responsibility the school has for safeguarding those using the site outside of normal school hours, ensuring the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time. School must have sight of the up to date **Child Protection Policy** of any organisation hiring the school's facilities.
- 4.17** The school operates **Safer Recruitment** practices, including ascertaining the suitability of volunteers and employed colleagues, both employed directly or via an agency, who are working in regulated activities.
- 4.18** Allegations against colleagues, including volunteers, are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 4.19** Our procedures are reviewed and updated annually as a minimum, or as there are changes to legislation.

## **5. Retention of Records**

- 5.1** When a disclosure of abuse or an allegation against a colleagues or volunteer has been made, our school must have a record of this. These records are maintained in a way that is confidential and

secure, in accordance with our  
**Record Keeping Policy and Data Protection Legislation.**

- 5.2** There is a statutory requirement for our school to pass any child protection records to the pupil's next school. We are required to have an auditable system in place to evidence we have done so. Any transfer of records will be carried out using a secure method and will be sent separately to the pupil's general file.
- 5.3** The last statutory school maintains child protection files until a pupil reaches the age of 25 years, therefore if the transfer school is unknown, or a pupil is going to be electively home educated, any child protection files will remain at our school in a secure location. Child protection files will only be destroyed when the pupil reaches their 25th birthday.
- 5.4** We have a robust system for reviewing our archived information held. Our files are stored and disposed of in line with GDPR protocols.

## **6. Confidentiality**

- 6.1** We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 6.2** The Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead must only disclose personal information about a pupil to other colleagues on a need to know basis.
- 6.3** Colleagues must not keep duplicate or personal records of child protection concerns. All information must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and securely stored in the designated location within the school, separate from the pupil records.
- 6.4** All colleagues are aware they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another as they have a duty to share. Colleagues must, however, reassure the child that information will only be shared with those people who will be able to help them and therefore need to know.
- 6.5** We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care (First Response) with their parent/carer's consent, unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with First Response on this point. We recognise that GDPR must not be a barrier for sharing information regarding safeguarding concerns.
- 6.6** Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers as outlined in KCSIE 2023 to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

## **7. Dealing with a disclosure**

In the event of a child disclosing abuse colleagues must:

- 7.1** Listen to the child, allowing the child to tell what has happen in their own way, and at their own pace. Colleagues must not interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- 7.2** Remain calm. Be reassuring and supportive, endeavouring to not respond emotionally.
- 7.3** Not ask leading questions. Colleagues are reminded to ask questions only when seeking clarification about something the child may have said or to gain sufficient information to know that this is a safeguarding concern. Colleagues are trained to use TED; Tell, Explain, Describe.
- 7.4** Make an accurate record of what they have seen/heard using the school's record keeping processes, recording; times, dates or locations mentioned, using as many words and expressions used by the



child, as possible. Colleagues must not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names used by the child. (Adhere to the note taking guidance distributed to all teachers.) This is the use of MyConcern.

- 7.5** Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone.
- 7.6** With regards to Child on Child Abuse, colleagues must reassure the victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- 7.7** Colleagues must explain to the child what will happen next and the need for the information to be shared with the DSL.
- 7.8** In the unlikely event of the DSL and Deputy DSLs not being available, colleagues are aware they must share concerns with the most senior colleague available.
- 7.9** **If there is immediate risk of harm to a child, colleagues will NOT DELAY and will ring 999 / 101.**
- 7.10** The child will be monitored/accompanied at all times following a disclosure, until a plan is agreed as to how best they can be safeguarded.
- 7.11** Following a report of concerns the DSL must:
- 7.11.1** Decide whether there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm, in which case a referral must be made to First Response and the police if it is appropriate. The rationale for this decision should be recorded by the DSL.
  - 7.11.2** Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with parents/carers and, where possible, obtain consent before making a referral to First Response. 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 First Response or the police whether the parents/carers 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.
  - 7.11.3** If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the DSL (or Deputies) must contact First Response by telephone in first instance and then complete the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) 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
  - 7.11.4** If the child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police must be called. The DSL must then notify First Response of the occurrence and what action has been taken.
  - 7.11.5** If a child needs urgent medical attention, the DSL (or Deputies) should call an ambulance via 999. DSL to contact First Response; advice to be sought from First Response about informing parents/carers.
  - 7.11.6** Emphasis is that colleagues must not presume someone else will or has passed on a safeguarding concern to the DSL or appropriate senior teacher. Worries over GDPR must

also not prevent information sharing with regards to safeguarding. Link also provided to aid colleagues in this. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

- 7.11.7** Being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Further information about serious case reviews can be found in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children. Examples of poor practice include:

- 7.11.8** Failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- 7.11.9** Poor record keeping;
- 7.11.10** Failing to listen to the views of the child;
- 7.11.11** Failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- 7.11.12** Not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies;
- 7.11.13** Sharing information too slowly; and
- 7.11.14** A lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

## 8. Supporting Colleagues

- 8.1** We recognise that colleagues becoming involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, could find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 8.2** We will support such colleagues by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support if necessary. This could be provided by the Head or another trusted colleague, Occupational Health, and/or a representative of a professional body, Employee Assistance Programme (PAM) or trade union, as appropriate.
- 8.3** In consultation with all colleagues, we have adopted a **Code of Conduct** for colleagues working in our school. This forms part of colleagues' induction and is in the colleagues handbook. All colleagues know how to access the **Code of Conduct** to refer to it. It is situated under Policies on the Stowe Central and colleagues are sent an e-copy.
- 8.4** All colleagues are required to sign that they have read, understood and agree to comply with the agreed standards of practice set out in the colleagues **Code of Conduct**.

## 9. Allegations against colleagues and volunteers (including Governors)

- 9.1** All school colleagues and volunteers must take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents/carers to be conducted in view of other adults (See also section 7 above). There must be no 1:1 contact between colleagues and pupils which is not "open to the casual observer".
- 9.2** We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a colleague or volunteer. If such an allegation is made, the colleague notified of the allegation will immediately inform the Head or the

most senior teacher, if the Head is not present.

- 93** The Head on all such occasions must immediately discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The purpose of an initial discussion is for the LADO and the Case Manager to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action.
- 94** The Head /DSL must:
- 94.1** Follow all advice given by the LADO throughout the investigation process, including how to manage the colleague or volunteer against whom the allegation is made, as well as supporting other colleagues and volunteers within the workplace.
  - 94.2** Follow all advice given by the LADO relating to supporting the child making the allegation, as well as other children connected to the organisation.
  - 94.3** Ensure feedback is provided to the LADO about the outcome of any internal investigations.
- 95** If the allegation made to a colleague concerns the Head, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult the LADO without notifying the Head first.
- 96** The school will follow the local safeguarding procedures for managing allegations against colleagues and volunteers, a copy of which can be found in the Stowe Central.
- 97** Suspension of the colleague against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration and, if necessary, we will consult with the LADO in making this decision. Guidance will also be sought from the People Department.
- 98** If a suspension is made, restrictions will apply to all colleagues and volunteers regarding contact with them whilst they are suspended, including contact via social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- 99** Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will follow the Buckinghamshire County Council procedures for managing allegations against colleagues and where necessary, the suspension of adults from school premises.
- 9.10** Should an individual colleague, governor or volunteer be involved in child protection, other safeguarding procedures or Police investigations in relation to abuse or neglect, they must immediately inform the Head. In these circumstances, the school will need to assess whether there is any potential for risk of transfer to the workplace and the individual's own work with children.
- 9.11** Stowe has a policy to deal with concerns and allegations which do not meet the harm threshold for the LADO to intervene and it is found in ***Allegations of Abuse made against teachers and other colleagues Policy 2023***. Concerns and allegations may arise in several ways from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken. It is important that schools and colleges have appropriate policies and processes in place to manage this information and take appropriate action to safeguard children.
- 9.12** Stowe School has a robust and detailed Low Levels Concerns Policy which is overseen by the Head, DSL and Head of People. The Low Level Concerns are reviewed regularly by the Head, DSL and Group Head of People. The Low Level Concerns policy can be found on the /Stowe Central.
- 9.13** When Stowe hires or rents out the school's facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for

example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe. When services or activities are provided by Stowe, under the direct supervision or management of Stowe colleagues, our arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. Stowe School will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with Stowe's DSL on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on Stowe's roll. Stowe will also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The guidance on Keeping Children Safe in out-of-school settings details the safeguarding arrangements that schools and colleges should expect these providers to have in place

## 10. Whistleblowing

- 10.1** We have a **Whistleblowing Policy** which can be found on the Stowe Central and colleagues are given an e-copy. Colleagues are required to familiarise themselves with this document during their induction period. <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>
- 10.2** All colleagues must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and report their concerns to the Head or Chair of Governors.
- 10.3** The NSPCC's "what you can do to report abuse" dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for colleagues who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school. Colleagues can call 0800 028 0285, which is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday, and email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## 11. Physical intervention/Positive handling

- 11.1** Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by colleagues is set out separately, as part of our colleagues Code of Conduct and our Restraint Policy.

## 12. Anti-Bullying

- 12.1** Anti-Bullying is referenced within the Anti-Bullying Policy and measures are in place to prevent and respond to all forms of bullying, which acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## 13. Discriminatory Incidents

- 13.1** In line with the **Equalities Act 2010**, our **Equalities Opportunities Policy** and **Equality Policy and Action Plan, and the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy** Stowe address all forms of discriminatory incidents. It takes into account the guidance offered by the Buckinghamshire guidance document 'Equally Safe – Dealing with Prejudice Related Incidents Guidance for Schools'.

## 14. Health and Safety

- 14.1** We recognise the importance of safeguarding pupils throughout the school day. Our **Health and Safety policy** reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children, both physically and emotionally, within the school environment.
- 14.2** Part of the safeguarding measures we have in place include the safe dropping off and collection of pupils at the start and end of the school day. All day parents/carers must deliver their children to the appointed dropping off and collecting points, depending on the child's House. Parents/carers are expected to inform us if there is to be a change in the arrangement of collection for their child.
- 14.3** Pupils who leave the site during the school day do so only with the written permission of a parent/carer and are collected by an authorised adult where appropriate. School should be notified by the parents/carers regarding whom they have authorised for this task. Pupils should sign in at House on arrival and sign out on departure.
- 14.4** Parents will still collect their child from their appointed collection point even at the end of an extended day.
- 14.5** In the event of a pupil going missing during the course of the school day we will carry out immediate checks to ensure the pupil is not on site, we will then make contact with the pupil's parents/carers and inform the police.

## 15. Prevent Duty

- 15.1** We are aware of the Prevent Duty under **Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015** to protect young people from being drawn into terrorism. This is as a safeguarding matter like any other and these processes will be applied to support children and their families where vulnerabilities are identified.
- 15.2** All school colleagues and governors will have completed Prevent training.
- 15.3** Colleagues will be aware that Prevent referrals may be passed onto a multi-agency Channel panel to discuss the individual referred. A representative of the school may be asked to attend to help with the assessment. If this occurs the school's representative will have completed a **Channel awareness e-learning module**.
- 15.4** We have in place and monitor appropriate web filtering systems so that pupils cannot view potentially extreme material.
- 15.5** Colleagues understand the need for a culture of vigilance to be present in the school to support safeguarding. This includes awareness and sensitivity to changes in the attitudes of pupils, which may indicate they are at risk of radicalisation.

## 16. Digital-Safety

- 16.1** All colleagues are aware of the school policy on **Digital-Safety** which sets out our expectations relating to:
  - 16.1.1** Creating a safer online learning environment,
  - 16.1.2** Giving everyone the skills, knowledge and understanding to help children stay safe on-line, question the information they are accessing and support the development of critical thinking,
  - 16.1.3** Inspiring safe and responsible use of mobile technologies, to combat behaviours on-line which may make pupils vulnerable, including sexting (youth-produced sexual imagery),
  - 16.1.4** Use of mobile technology both within school and on school trips/ outings
  - 16.1.5** Use of camera equipment, including smart phones,
  - 16.1.6** What steps to take if there are concerns and where to go for help,
  - 16.1.7** Colleagues use of social media as set out in the **Colleagues Code of Conduct**.
- 16.2** Cyber-bullying by children, via texts, social media and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti- bullying procedures. This includes sexting and image exchange under threat or through coercion. Stoics are made aware of the dangers in their weekly tutorial & PSHE classes. It is also acknowledged that online bullying may run concurrently with face to face abuse.
- 16.3** Pupils, colleagues and parents/carers are supported to understand the risks posed by:
  - 16.3.1** the CONTENT accessed by pupils
  - 16.3.2** their CONDUCT on-line
  - 16.3.3** who they have CONTACT with in the digital world and
  - 16.3.4** COMMERCE - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial

scams. If you feel your pupils, students or colleagues are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

**16.3.5** Pupils who are also at risk of being drawn into Cyber-Crime should consider being referred to the **Cyber Choices** programme which aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests

**16.4** We have a separate **Mobile Phone Policy** available from Houseparents which sets out the acceptable use of mobile technologies by pupils whilst onsite. This includes sanctions that will be applied when these boundaries are not adhered to.

**16.5** Colleagues' use of mobile technology whilst on site is set out in the **Colleagues Code of Conduct**.

**16.6** Online/Remote Learning code of conduct in the Colleagues Code of Conduct must be read (especially in a present/post Covid-19 schooling environment).

**16.7** The school's E-Safety policy should be read alongside DfE guidance: Teaching on-line safety in schools, 2019.

**16.8** [Harmful online challenges and hoaxes](#) - link to Harmful online challenges and online - this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.

**16.9** Stowe School will ensure that all colleagues undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction. This training will be regularly updated.

**16.10** Whilst considering our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, Stowe School will do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online risks from the school's ICT system. As part of this process, Stowe School will ensure it has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. Stowe will ensure that the leadership team and relevant colleagues have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Stowe will ensure it considers the number of and age range of the pupils, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the ICT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks. Stowe has considered this cost versus risk equation and deemed the cost appropriate to best manage pupil safeguarding. The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems we use will be informed in part by the risk assessment required by The Prevent Duty.

**16.11** Stowe School will be using the filtering and monitoring programme: SENS<sup>1</sup> for pupil 1 to 1 devices and FortiGuard for a network firewall. This will be overseen by the Group Director of ICT, DSL and a DDSL who will regularly check and respond accordingly to any flags raised linked with pastoral and/or safeguarding concerns by pupil ICT use. The SENS and FortiGuard systems will take into consideration: CONTACT, CONDUCT, CONTENT and COMMERCE.

**16.12** Stowe school will ensure it has the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems; colleagues and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Policies and practices in this area are reviewed by the DSL and Group Director of ICT annually, or as required. (Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network). In addition, Stowe will ensure it is meeting the Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK. Broader

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<sup>1</sup> SENS will be turned completely off during extended school holidays (not exets). This will be done for the wellbeing of the DSL team. Parents will be told that it is their responsibility. During school holidays to monitor the internet use of their child(ren) whilst they are with them.

guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK)

**16.13** As part of our commitment to safer recruitment, Stowe School's People Department will also ensure social media checks are done on shortlisted candidates on anything present online which is in the public domain.

## **17. Sending Nudes/Semi Nude Imagery**

Sending Nude/Semi Nude Imagery', also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery', is one of a number of 'risk-taking' behaviours associated with the use of digital technologies, social media or the internet. It includes Sharing nudes/Semi Nude images and/or videos. It is accepted that children experiment and challenge boundaries and therefore the risks associated with 'online' activity can never be completely eliminated.

**17.1** Colleagues, pupils and parents/carers are supported, via training, to understand the creation and sharing of sexual imagery, such as photos or videos, of under 18s is illegal. This includes images of pupils themselves if they are under the age of 18. This is done via PSHE, HouseParent and DSL.

**17.2** Any youth produced sexual imagery disclosures will follow the normal safeguarding practices and protocols for our school. We will also use the guidelines for responding to incidents, as set out in the publication '[Sexting in Schools and Colleges](#)' produced by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety.

**17.3** If the incident meets the threshold, it may be necessary to refer to the police in a timely manner; contact will be through a safer schools officer, a PCSO (Police Community Security Officer), local neighbourhood police or by dialing 101. Such a report will result in an Outcome 21 record being generated by the police. We will always endeavour to speak to the parents/carers of the pupils involved prior to any report being made to the police.

**17.4** Where a pupil has been blackmailed or 'duped' into sending nudes/semi nudes they will be supported by the school and a report to CEOP will be filed.

## **18. Child on Child Abuse**

Stowe believes that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment free from harm by both adults and other pupils. We recognise that some safeguarding concerns can occur via Child on Child abuse. Stowe adopts a zero tolerance approach to Child on Child Abuse.

It is essential that **all** colleagues understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

All colleagues should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important that if colleagues have **any** concerns regarding Child on Child abuse they should speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

**18.1** All colleagues recognise that Child on Child issues may include, but may not be limited to:

**18.1.1** Bullying (including cyber bullying)

**18.1.2** Racial abuse



- 18.1.3** Physical abuse, such as hitting, hair-pulling, shaking, biting or other forms of physical harm and/or the threat of physical abuse.
- 18.1.4** Sexual violence, or the threat thereof and sexual harassment
- 18.1.5** Abuse related to sexual orientation or identity
- 18.1.6** Sexting as set out in section 17
- 18.1.7** Initiation type violence and rituals
- 18.1.8** Emotional abuse
- 18.1.9** Child on Child issues can also occur within intimate relationships
- 18.1.10** Child on Child issues can also occur within initiations/hazing such as harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element

**18.2** The following will be considered when dealing with incidents:

- 18.2.1** Whether there is a great difference in power between the victim and perpetrators i.e. size, age, ability, perceived social status or vulnerabilities, including SEND, CP/CIN or LAC
- 18.2.2** Whether the perpetrators have previously tried to harm or intimidate pupils
- 18.2.3** Any concerns about the intentions of the alleged perpetrators

**18.3** In order to minimise the risk of Child on Child abuse taking place, the school must:

- 18.3.1** Deliver PSHE to include teaching pupils about how to keep safe and understanding what acceptable behaviour looks like. This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which was made compulsory from September 2022. The statutory guidance can be found here: [Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education\(RSE\) and health education.](#)
- 18.3.2** Ensure that pupils know that all colleagues will listen to them if they have concerns and will act upon them
- 18.3.3** Have systems in place for any pupil to be able to voice concerns
- 18.3.4** Develop robust risk assessments if appropriate
- 18.3.5** Refer to any other relevant policies when dealing with incidents, such as the Pupil Code of Conduct and/or the **Anti-Bullying Policy and Child on Child Abuse Policy.**
- 18.3.6** The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that colleagues endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with colleagues. This is done via the 'Pride Society' and through colleagues' champions in key identified areas of EDI. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

- 18.4** We recognise that 'Upskirting' involves taking a photograph under an individual's clothing without their knowledge. We understand that it causes the victim distress and humiliation. Colleagues recognise that 'Upskirting' is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 and must promptly report any such incidence to the Head, DSL or most senior colleague.
- 18.5** Reference will be made to the following government guidance and part 5 of the **Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2023** to ensure that all colleagues have an understanding of the serious nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools. Departmental advice [What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect.
- 18.6** Stowe realises it is important to note that children may not find it easy to tell colleagues about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report or a colleague may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed.
- 18.7** As part of Child on Child abuse: managing Harmful Sexual Behaviour and helping to work out how harmful the sexual behaviour is, Stowe School will use the Hackett Continuum of children and young people's sexual behaviours (Hackett, 2010). Although some sexual behaviour between pupils would fall into the 'Normal' – it is clear within the school rules that no pupils should engage in any acts of a sexual nature on the school premises.



## 19. Cultural Issues

- 19.1** As a school we are aware of the cultural diversity of the community around us and work sensitively to address the unique culture of our pupils and their families as they relate to safeguarding and child protection. This includes:
- children at risk of harm from abuse arising from culture, faith and belief on the part of their parent, carer or wider community.
- 19.2** Colleagues must report concerns about abuse linked to culture, faith and beliefs in the same way as other child protection concerns.

## 20. So Called 'Honour' Based Abuse

- 20.1** Colleagues at our school understand there is a legal duty to report known cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and So Called 'Honour' Based Abuse to the police and they will do this with the support of the DSL. [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK](#). The FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty is a legal duty provided for in the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015). The legislation requires teaching colleagues to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:
- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or they
  - Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.
- 20.2** Our school is aware of the need to respond to concerns relating to forced marriage and understand that it is illegal, a form of child abuse and a breach of children's rights. We recognise some pupils, due to capacity or additional learning needs, may not be able to give an informed consent and this will be dealt with under our child protection processes. Stowe colleagues can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact 020 7008 0151 [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk) and [The Right to Choose](#)
- 20.3** We are aware of the signs of FGM [Female genital mutilation \(FGM\) | NSPCC](#)
- 20.4** We recognise both male and female pupils may be subject to honour based abuse e.g. where children's cultural backgrounds are at odds with their behaviours such as sexuality, under-age sex, relationships, gender identity or life style choices.
- 20.5** We promote awareness through training and access to resources, ensuring that the signs and indicators are known and recognised by colleagues.
- 20.6** Any suspicions or concerns for forced marriage are reported to the DSL who will refer to First Response or the police if emergency action is required.
- 20.7** Stowe is aware that from February 2023, engaging in conduct aimed at causing a child to marry before they turn eighteen is now a criminal offence, regardless of the absence of violence, threats, or coercion. The law covers both official marriages and non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' in line with the existing forced marriage legislation. Stowe will aim to protect all its pupils with regards to this legislation and refer to external agencies and authorities as required.

## 21. Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, children's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that children form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers may have little influence over these contexts, and children's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent/carer-children relationships.

- 21.1** At Stowe, we recognise that pupils may encounter safeguarding issues that happen in the wider community and we will respond to such concerns, reporting to the appropriate agencies in order to support and protect the pupil.
- 21.2** All colleagues, and especially the DSL and DDSs, will consider the context of incidents that occur outside of school to establish if environmental factors may be putting the pupil's welfare and safety at risk.
- 21.3** Children who may be alleged perpetrators will also be supported to understand the impact of

contextual issues on their safety and welfare.

**214** In such cases the individual needs and vulnerabilities of each child will be considered.

## **22. Serious Violence**

**221** All colleagues are aware of signs and 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 significant change in well-being or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Colleagues are aware that 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.

**222** At Stowe, we are aware of the risks to children and will take appropriate measures to manage any situations arising.

## **23. Use of Photography**

23.1 We will often use photographs and film to capture achievements, monitor a child's development and help promote successes within our school. We like to have a record of all the wonderful activities our pupils take part in; guidelines for the use of photography in Stowe are set out in our Terms and Conditions, the Privacy Notice for Parents and the Privacy Notice for Pupils.

## **24. Communication with Parents**

24.1 Stowe recognises the importance of working, where appropriate, in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of our students. The school will therefore:

24.2 Make parents aware of the school's statutory role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, including the duty to refer students on, where necessary, by making all policies available on the website and on request.

24.3 Work with parents to support the needs of their child.

24.4 Consider the safety of the student and, should a concern arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the responsibility to seek advice prior to contacting parents. A risk assessment and care plan to protect a child will be implemented where necessary within the school for example in the case of Child on Child abuse.

24.5 Aim to help parents understand that the school has a responsibility for the welfare of all students and has a duty to refer cases to the Local Authority in the interests of the student as appropriate.

24.6 Ensure a robust complaints system is in place to deal with issues raised by parents and carers. Provide advice and signpost parents and carers to other services where students need extra support.

24.7 Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers as outlined in KCSIE 2023 to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

24.8 Ensure that where there has been an investigation, that the form of that investigation, the outcome of that investigation and any sanctions applied to any child found to have perpetrated the abuse, is communicated to the appropriate parents/carers in a sensitive and appropriate way.

## 25. Alternative Provision

25.1 The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs; it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to.

The Department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- ❑ [Alternative provision - DfE Statutory Guidance](#); and
- ❑ [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - DfE Statutory Guidance](#)

Stowe School is aware of those pupils who have an alternative provision and ensure their needs and requirements are met and safeguarded appropriately.

## 26. Mental Health

**26.1** At Stowe, we are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or may be at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

**26.2** Colleagues recognise that traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact throughout a child's life and this can impact on mental health, behaviour and education.

**26.3** Colleagues will report any mental health concern that is linked to a safeguarding concern to the DSL via MyConcern.

**26.4** Where there are concerns for a child's mental health Stowe will seek advice from a trained professional, who would be able to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. This involves our in house therapy team. GP, Nurses and we have a working relationship with the Priory and Giaroli Centre.

[Mental health and behaviour in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools.pdf)

## 27. SEND Pupils

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

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

**27.2** Colleagues are trained annually to understand and be aware of these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded

## **28. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

28.1 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. This can occur online, face to face (both physically and verbally) and can take place inside or outside of school. As set out in KCSIE 2023, all colleagues maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and it is never acceptable.

28.2 All colleagues have a responsibility to address inappropriate behaviour in a timely manner, however seemingly insignificant it may appear.

28.3 All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. No child will ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or that they are creating a problem for our school.

28.4 Please also refer to Stowe's Child on Child Abuse Policy and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy.

## **29. Children who need a social worker (Child Protection and Child In Need Plans)**

- 29.1 Colleagues recognise that children may have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs and this can cause them to have barriers with attendance, behaviour, learning and mental health.
- 29.2. Stowe will share information with a social worker for any child whom they are supporting to ensure decisions are made in the best interests of the child.
- 29.3. Informed decisions will be made by colleagues with regards to safeguarding for those children who are being supported by a social worker.

## **30.Children with family members in prison**

30.1 Children who have a parent in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Stowe will access support for any affected children through The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) who can provide information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children.

[NICCO](#)

## **31. Homelessness**

31.1 Stowe recognises that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare and that some 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians. If there are indicators that a family or individual are at risk, Stowe will seek timely support from the local authority.

## **32. Modern Slavery and the National referral Mechanism**

32.1 Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. If Stowe are concerned that a child is being affected by modern slavery they will refer to the home office guidance for further information on the indicators that someone may be a victim, what support is available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM, whilst also seeking support from the local authority.

[Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **33. Allegations against pupils**

33.1 If an allegation is made against a pupil, Stowe will follow the procedures in the Behaviour Policy with regards to sanctions that may need to be applied.

33.2 Where there is a risk of significant harm, a child on child referral will be made to Children's Services for either victim, perpetrator or both.

33.3 If it is necessary for a child to be interviewed by the police, or other authorities, school will ensure that parents/carers are informed as soon as possible, following advice from external agencies and that the child is supported by an appropriate adult during the interview. The safety and welfare of the child will always be carefully considered by school.

## **34. Policy Review**

34.1 The Governing Body of our school is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy. The date the next review is due is on the front cover of this policy.



## **Appendix**

Everyone who works with children has a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. They should be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and know what to do and to whom to speak if they become concerned about a child or if a child discloses to them.

The following is intended as a reference for school colleagues and parents/carers if they become concerned that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

The Children Act 1989 defines abuse as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer 'significant harm'. Harm means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development. Four categories of abuse are identified:

### **Categories of Abuse**

Child abuse is a form of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children/ people 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 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.

#### ***Recognising Physical Abuse***

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury.
- Several different explanations provided for an injury.
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment.
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury.
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment.
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury).
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments.
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

#### **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. It is acknowledged that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where it occurs. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. Some level

of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay.
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate, or not appropriate attachment.
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach.
- Aggressive behaviour towards others.
- Scapegoating within the family, such as a parent blaming the child for something bad that happened to them (e.g. losing a job).
- Frozen watchfulness.
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence.
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others.
- The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child 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 [Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool](#) can be used as guidance to support professionals in identifying and responding to sexual behaviour in children.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct.
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play, or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age.
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation.
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation, and suicide attempts.
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners.
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties).

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area.
- Blood on underclothes.
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed.
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen, and thighs, and sexually transmitted disease.

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

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

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, and medical care.
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic, and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause.
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss.
- Child thrives away from home environment.
- Child frequently absent from school.
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent.

Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

## Early Help Indicators

1. **Any** child may benefit from early help, but all school and college colleagues should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- ☐ is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- ☐ has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- ☐ has a mental health need;
- ☐ is a young carer;
- ☐ is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- ☐ is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- ☐ is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- ☐ is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- ☐ has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- ☐ is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- ☐ is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- ☐ has returned home to their family from care;
- ☐ is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;

② is a privately fostered child; and

② is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

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<sup>7</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

<sup>8</sup> More detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

## **Risk Indicators**

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but they:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm.
- Justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- May require consultation with and/or referral to Children's Services.

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred. In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/carers.
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses.
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child, frequently complain about/to the child, and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment).
- Be absent or misusing substances.
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits.
- Be involved in domestic abuse.

Colleagues should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

## **Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2022 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2022. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2022 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), all of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of Child on Child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. The Act's provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

### **Operation Encompass**

[Operation Encompass](#) operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

### **National Domestic Abuse Helpline**

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships)

and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)

- [Home : Operation Encompass](#) (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

Children who live in households where domestic violence occurs can suffer physical, psychological and emotional harm through directly or indirectly witnessing and experiencing it. The definition of 'harm' under the Children's Act 1989 includes impairment caused by seeing or hearing abuse of another person. There are long and short term consequences to the child of domestic violence and these can manifest themselves in different ways depending on the child's age, maturity and support network. The distress and anxiety caused by domestic violence can manifest itself in different ways and it is important that professionals working with children and families are aware of these signs:

- anxiety or depression
- difficulty sleeping
- nightmares or flashbacks
- physical symptoms, such as tummy aches
- bed wetting
- temper tantrums
- school absence
- aggression (out of character)
- low sense of self-worth
- self-harm.

### **Procedures in respect of Child Abuse**

If you see or hear something that is concerning:

- Don't ignore it or assume that it is someone else's responsibility to report it.
- Upload all information to the school's safeguarding systems and seek advice immediately from your DSL. [*MyConcern*]
- Don't feel silly – if it worries you, someone else needs to know.
- If it is something related to safeguarding, but not a child whose safety is immediately at risk, inform the appropriate Pastoral Leader or safeguarding officer in person and follow up with a one-line email notifying the DSL that there is a safeguarding concern.
- If it is related to a child being at risk, see the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately and definitely before the child goes home that day where possible.
- All colleagues may raise concerns directly with Children's Services if they feel an incident is not being dealt with appropriately or they are unable to locate relevant colleagues.
- Concerns about adults in the school should be made directly to the Head Teacher.

### **Exploitation**

Exploitation is a form of child abuse and may take a number of forms:

#### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual

images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrators or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology [CSE Guidance Core Document](#).

We recognise that exploitation includes the trafficking of children and Modern Day Slavery. [Victims of modern slavery – frontline colleagues guidance](#)

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- Underage sexual activity.
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour.
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex.
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections.
- In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, and miscarriage.
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources.
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile.
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, a mobile phone, etc.) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs, etc.).
- Changes in the way they dress.
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends.
- Seen at known places of concern (e.g. brothels).
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are.
- Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Contact with known perpetrators.
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated, and fearful of certain people or situations.
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers.
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation.
- Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations.
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, etc.).



- Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress.
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Getting involved in crime.
- Police involvement, police records.
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership.
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

### **Extremism**

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

### **Potential signs of radicalisation and extremism**

There is no limit to the signs that you might notice – every student is different. However, some of the indicators colleagues should look out for include:

- **Vulnerability:** identity crisis, personal crisis, migration, unmet aspirations, and history of criminality. Access to extremist influences: friendship groups, internet activity, activities abroad i.e. military camps, and vocalised support of illegal or extremist/militant groups.
- **Experiences and influences:** social rejection, personal impact from civil unrest and wide spread media coverage of international events, change in appearance and behaviour, family conflict over religious reviews, and verbal or written evidence of support for terrorist activities.
- **Travel:** pattern of regular extended travel, evidence of falsifying identity documents, and unexplained absences.
- **Social factors:** disadvantaged background, lack of empathy and/or affinity with others, severe learning difficulties or mental health, being a child of a foreign national or refugee, experience of trauma or sectarian conflict, and extremist views of a significant other.
- It is always worth remembering that numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most children or young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation. For example, they may address mental health, relationship, or drug/alcohol issues.

## County Lines

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy (see link below), published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [HOME OFFICE](#)

Some signs to look out for include:

- An increase in visitors and cars to a house or flat.
- New faces appearing at the house or flat.
- New and regularly changing residents (e.g. different accents compared to local accent).
- Change in resident's mood and/or demeanour (e.g. secretive/ withdrawn/ aggressive/ emotional).
- Substance misuse and/or drug paraphernalia.
- Changes in the way young people you might know dress.
- Unexplained, sometimes unaffordable new things (e.g. clothes, jewellery, cars etc).
- Residents or young people you know going missing, potentially for long periods of time.
- Young people seen in different cars/taxis driven by unknown adults.
- Young people seeming unfamiliar with your community or where they are.
- Truancy, exclusion, and disengagement from school.
- An increase in anti-social behaviour in the community.
- Unexplained injuries.

All colleagues should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

All colleagues at will be made aware of the indicators that may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime.

Signs may include:

- Increased absence.
- Change in friendships.
- New relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- Significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

These could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

### Child Criminal Exploitation

As set out in the [Serious Violence Strategy](#) published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 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 perpetrators 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. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Taken from "[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)" 2019

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs and alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or education.
- Not taking part in education.

If a colleague suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

### FGM

Further guidance and information are available from:  
**NSPCC FGM Helpline**

Contact days and times: **24 hours**  
Tel: **0800 028 3550**  
Email: **fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk**

### Looked after children

All colleagues in Stowe School will have an awareness of issues around safeguarding looked after children. The leadership team will ensure that colleagues have the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe. Colleagues will be aware of the legal status of a looked after child's care arrangements. In particular, they will ensure that appropriate colleagues have the information they need in relation to a student's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the student's care arrangements and the

levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the student's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the student. The Head Teacher will appoint a Designated Teacher (Mike Rickner) to promote the educational achievement of students who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training.

### **Liaison with the virtual Head**

Virtual school heads receive pupil premium plus additional funding based on the latest published numbers of children looked after in the authority. Stowe's DSL will work with the virtual school head to monitor the child's welfare and discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of the child and meet the needs identified in the student's personal education plan.

### **Pupils with a social worker**

We recognise that children with social workers can need extra support. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behavior and mental health. The DSL and all colleagues will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

### **Children with SEN and Disabilities**

#### **ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

Stowe School recognises that some pupils may have specific learning difficulties, may be academically highly talented (AHT) or have English as an additional language. The Skills Department, the EAL Department and the coordinators for AHTs support these pupils to help them achieve their potential in public exams as well as becoming successful independent learners. Stowe offers its pupils a tailored programme of support dependent on need. Details of programmes followed, along with updated scores (SEN) are recorded on ISAMs for colleagues to access.

#### **STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

The Skills Department helps students overcome specific difficulties and thus become successful independent learners. This is carried out through in class support, differentiation within the classroom, prep support, small group tuition and occasionally one to one lessons. The aims of the Department are to increase reading, spelling and numeracy abilities of pupils who are within the below average and low average range and to prepare pupils for public exams across all of the subjects. Pupils are identified by prep schools, the Third Form screening or by teachers. They then access a range of support dependent on need and severity. Many pupils come for a series of lessons in a small group to remediate the identified problem. Some attend prep club in order to gain support for prep and prepare for exams, some have in class support. In rare cases, a student will give up a whole subject and attend Skills for up to three lessons per week. Explicit targets are set by the pupil when attending skills and these are reflected upon each term. Teachers keep a record of skills taught and progress made. This is communicated to parents via reports and parents' meeting.

#### **Pupils with an EHCP**

Stowe School will implement the support detailed in the EHCP within the funding provided by the local authority. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure the pupil has the best possible

opportunities here at Stowe within the EHCP funding. Where a pupil needs to be assessed for an Education and Health Care Plan, the SENCo will coordinate school records and information to support the application.

### **Child abduction and community safety incidents**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police colleagues. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: [www.actionagainstabduction.org](http://www.actionagainstabduction.org) and [www.clevernevergoes.org](http://www.clevernevergoes.org)

### **Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 12-17 year olds <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds>

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

## **Managing Safeguarding: Legislation and Law**

### **Human Rights Act**

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.

Under the HRA, it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and

applied without discrimination, 25 and

- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information (including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found at Human Rights | Equality and Human Rights Commission ([equalityhumanrights.com](http://equalityhumanrights.com) ).

## **Equality Act 2010**

Schools and colleges have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality 21 Human Rights Act 1998 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk)) 22 Equality Act 2010 Advice for schools. The Public Sector Equality Duty is a legal requirement for schools and colleges that are public bodies. Public Sector Equality Duty (advice for schools)

As a matter of law, Article 14 only applies where the act complained of falls within the ambit of another Convention right, but in this context it should always be assumed that either through Article 8 or Article 2 of Protocol 1, or both, Article 14 will be engaged. 25 Act).

According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

Whilst all of the above protections are important, in the context of safeguarding, this guidance, and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race.

Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need, this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people, including those with long term conditions. A school or college, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) ), it may also be useful for colleges. For further information Equality Act guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission ([equalityhumanrights.com](http://equalityhumanrights.com)). Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is found in the Equality Act. Compliance with the PSED is a legal requirement for state-funded schools and colleges, advice on this – including on specific duties, is set out in the advice linked above.

The PSED places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics (see para 87) and means that whenever significant

decisions are being made or policies developed, specific consideration must be given to the equality implications of these such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism. This is one reason why good record-keeping and monitoring of all forms of abuse and harassment is essential.

The PSED helps schools and colleges (which are subject to it) to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil and student outcomes. Some pupils or students may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. Such concerns will differ between education settings, but it is important schools and colleges are conscious of disproportionate vulnerabilities and integrate this into their safeguarding policies and procedures. For further information please see Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England | Equality and Human Rights Commission ([equalityhumanrights.com](http://equalityhumanrights.com))

### **Writing up a Pupil Safeguarding Disclosure**

What to include in the MyConcern box: Details of Concern

1.1 Time (use 24 hour clock), date (dd/mm/yy) and location (be specific – back of classroom X, common room in X boarding house) of the disclosure conversation (who is making the report will be automatically generated via doing it on MyConcern – if in any other format please record this detail)

1.2 Document the full details of the child (name, age, school house).

1.3 Exact words used by the child about the incident or concern raised.

1.4 Record exactly what questions, if any, are asked of the child. Open ended questions should be used: Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me (TED) or when, where, what, how, who, why. Get clarification on words – feeling low will be different for everyone in how they experience it so don't assume their feeling low is the same as yours.

1.5 Location and day/time of the incident.

1.6 Establish whether anyone else was present at the time of the incident and why? (pupils or colleagues use full names).

1.7 Who else has the pupil reported to? What action was taken and by who?

1.8 Use the body map function on MyConcern to record any physical marks/injuries. It should also be recorded if the colleague e any physical injuries and why).

1.9 Why, as the colleague, you are concerned?

1.10 All information recorded should be:

- Legible and written using straightforward language (use bullet points if easier)
- Using a child's own words (verbatim) as much as possible
- Factually accurate, i.e. not opinion

Remember the individual has chosen you to talk to so listen in a non-judgmental way, show empathy, don't jump to conclusions or make assumptions.

There are no barriers to sharing a safeguarding concern.

Example of Good Practice:

"Spoke to Joseph Bloggs (3<sup>rd</sup> form Cobham) on 22/04/2022 at 15:00 in Queen's House Parent Office.

Present at the meeting: Joseph Bloggs and Mr Michael Rickner (DSL)

Joseph said "When I was standing in the supper queue, John Smith\* punched me in the back of the head 5 or 6 times and took my phone from my hand and would not let me have it back"

(\*after this immediate disclosure – Michael Rickner showed Joseph the pictures of the 2 John Smiths on ISAMs and Joseph pointed out it was John Smith in the Lower 6<sup>th</sup> in Walpole).

Michael Rickner asked Joseph – 'Has this happened to you before?'

Joseph Bloggs – Yes, it happens most meal times, but this is first time he has stolen my phone.'

Michael Rickner – 'How long as this happened for?'

Joseph Bloggs – 'Since January 2023 – so about 4/5 months'

Michael Rickner – Are there any witness to John's behaviour?

Joseph Bloggs – 'Yes, my friend Colin, I always go to meals with him, so he has always witnessed it'

Etc etc

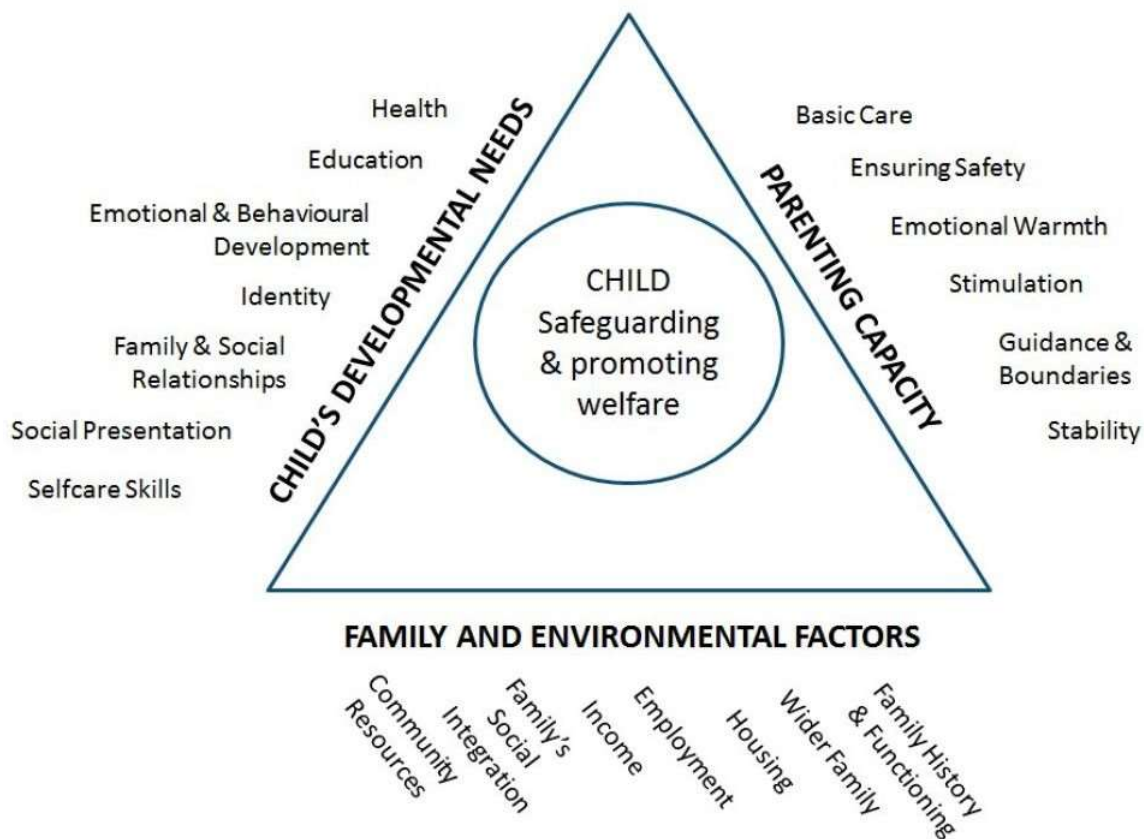
I am concerned and want to raise this as a possible safeguarding concern due to physical violence Joseph has encountered for the past 4 months as well as the most recent theft of his phone.'

I am the first-person Joseph has spoken to about this due to fear of recrimination from John and his friends. "



## Assessment Framework

(from Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018)



Every assessment should draw together relevant information gathered from the child and their family and from relevant practitioners including teachers and school colleagues, early years workers, health practitioners, the police and adult social care.

Every assessment of a child should reflect the unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context.

Each child whose referral has been accepted by children's social care should have their individual needs assessed, including an analysis of the parental capacity to meet those needs, whether they arise from issues within the family or the wider community.

Frequently, more than one child from the same family is referred and siblings within the family should always be considered.