



Achieving together
Light Oaks
Junior School

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Salford City Council

Written by: **SSCB/LA adopted policy**

Date: **September 2016**

Revised: **October 2014, September 2015**

Ratification by Governors				
Committee:	<i>Full Governing Body</i>	<i>Standards</i>	<i>Welfare, Inclusion & Pupil Support</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Date :	28th September 2015	Review Date:	September 2016	
Ratified by:	S Hughes			
Signature:				

Key Contacts

Headteacher & Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs Z Wilkinson

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs L. Buckley

Designated Looked After Children Lead

Mrs C Walker

Named Governor for Safeguarding & Looked After Children

Ms S Hughes

Please Note: All Key contacts can be contacted via the school by letter, email or phone:

Light Oaks Junior School
Lancaster Road,
Salford
M6 8LU
Tel: 0161 789 1070
Email: lightoaks.juniorschool@salford.gov.uk

The Bridge Partnership for child protection referrals – tel: 0161 603 4500 or e mail
worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk

GMP Public Protection Investigation Unit (PPIU) – for referrals/consultation about
crime-related safeguarding concerns – tel: 0161 856 5171 or e mail
parklane.ppiu@gmp.police.uk

Managing allegations against an employee (or volunteer) - Local Authority Designated
Officer (LADO) tel: 0161 603 4350 / 4445

Worried About a Child?

All reports or enquiries concerning the welfare or safety of a child must go straight to The Bridge Partnership on 0161 603 4500 as the first port of call. This applies to reports from council staff, the public, partners and outside agencies. The email address is
worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk

If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is home alone, the police should be called on 999.

This policy should be considered alongside school child protection procedures (Appendix 2) and other related policies in school. These are.... (for example)

- Light oaks Junior School Non Negotiables
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- School Security
- Anti-bullying
- Special Education Needs Report
- Health and Safety
- Online-safety
- Safer Working Practice
- Educational Visits Policy
- Staff Behaviour / Code of Conduct Policy
- Handling Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
- Whistleblowing
- Safer Recruitment
- Wellbeing
- Children Missing Education

NB This list is not exhaustive

A whole school policy on safeguarding children

Rationale

An effective whole school safeguarding policy is one which makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. It also gives clear direction to staff and others about expected responses to child protection issues. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which prioritise the needs of the child.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Light Oaks Junior School is a community Junior School (7-11yrs) based in Salford at the following address:

**Light Oaks Junior School
Lancaster Road,
Salford
M6 8LU
Tel: 0161 789 1070**

This policy sets out Light Oaks Junior School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the school.

- 1.2. Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school and beyond.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding Policy.

- (a) **Prevention:**
Providing children with a positive school atmosphere, where high quality teaching and pastoral support are central to the school ethos.
- (b) **Protection:**
Staff have knowledge of and follow agreed procedures. They are provided with high quality, up to date training and support to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns.
- (c) **Support:**
Children who have been subject to any form of abuse are supported and nurtured through the effective pastoral care system within the school. School staff who have responsibility for the care of children subject to abuse, are guided by the school Leadership and Child Protection Officers to provide the most effective support.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

This policy applies to **all** adults, including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors. The policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; Section 128 of the Education Act 2002; Education and Skills Act 2008 and in line with government publications: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015, Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need, and their Families' 2000, Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (2015) and 'What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused' 2015. The guidance reflects, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2016.

The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

2. School Commitment

- 2.1. We recognise that high self- esteem, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, and especially those at risk of or suffering harm from abuse or neglect.

Our school will therefore:

- (a) Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to by promoting respect around the school using: non-negotiables in the classroom; teaching a dedicated hour of wellbeing/PHSE every week; a series of planned assemblies; training for staff; nurture groups; staff trained in counselling and therapies available daily.

¹ Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc, and governors

- (b) Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. All children know about the sunshine room and we promote this as a safe space to go to during the day; all vulnerable pupils have named adults they can go to when necessary; class teachers build good relationships with pupils.
- (c) Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for Wellbeing & PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and/or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse. More information can be found in the Wellbeing Curriculum or on our website: www.lightoaks.juniorschool.co.uk
- (d) Include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills. More information can be found in the Wellbeing Curriculum or on our website: www.lightoaks.juniorschool.co.uk
- (e) Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and practitioners from other agencies.

2.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*. Schools and colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

2.3 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 states, '*all schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils*'. This Act also gives head teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.

2.4 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child. The development of appropriate multi-agency procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Salford Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB).

2.5 ¹ Salford Safeguarding Children Board

SSCB is a multi-agency forum that holds shared responsibility in promoting and safeguarding the children of Salford. Keeping children safe from abuse or neglect, ensuring they grow up in an environment of safe and effective care, enabling them to have optimum life chances is everyone's business.

SSCB has a statutory responsibility to ensure this principle is embedded in the work of each key agency. SSCB members are senior representatives of key statutory agencies

and others in Governance roles who have sufficient understanding and knowledge of safeguarding and welfare concerns to commit to agreed actions of their staff groups. SSCB allows for clear lines of accountability.

There are specific areas of focus:

- To ensure all agencies working with children or in services impacting on the welfare of children have safe recruitment practices.
- To provide an analysis and overview of Serious Case Reviews, ensuring lessons learned are devised into action plans and incorporated into agencies practice. Promoting safeguarding as a shared responsibility within agencies in Salford.
- To influence the local planning and commissioning of children's services or services impacting on children's welfare and safety and ensure safeguarding and the promotion of children's welfare is taken into account.
- To monitor the effectiveness of what is done in relation to safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare by partner agencies individually and collectively.

SSCB Membership

Salford Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) is made up of members whose role and seniority enable them to commit their organisation/agency to the development and maintenance of effective inter-agency working to safeguard children and young people in Salford. Details of the agencies that make up the board are listed in following link:

<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/>

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under Safeguarding and child protection procedures. The names of those carrying these responsibilities in school for the current year are listed in the key contacts section on page 1 of this document.

Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead

- 3.2 The Governing board of Light oaks Junior School has appointed two appropriate senior members of staff, from the school or college leadership team, to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This is explicit in the role-holder's job description

The DSLs have the appropriate authority and are given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.

NOTE: The Head Teacher and Named Governor should appoint a Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead(s) to the role provided that the appointment is made in the context of:

- i. proven and documented competency on the part of the appointee

- ii. robust arrangements for the Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead to liaise directly with the Head Teacher about child protection and safeguarding issues, including one to ones on a regular basis
- iii. sufficient direction and support given to the appointee so that they are recognised within the school community as fulfilling this role with confidence and competence
- iv. a clear school safeguarding policy that sets out for all stakeholders the respective roles and other arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

3.3 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads is to:

- Ensure that he/she receives SSCB refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date.
- In addition to their formal training, as set out above, their knowledge and skills should be updated, (for example via e- bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding person/leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- Liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2016*. During term time the designated person/lead and/or a deputy should always be available, during school/college hours, for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. It is a matter for the individual school/college and the designated safeguarding person/lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.
- Ensure that he/she attends all Designated Person Seminars on behalf of the school (or arranges for the deputy designated safeguarding person/lead to attend if exceptionally unable to do so themselves).
- Ensure that there is evidence that all staff and governors have read and understood Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- Ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Ensure that new staff receive school-based safeguarding and child protection training at induction.
- Ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding children at commencement of work.
- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Greater Manchester and Salford Safeguarding Children Procedures.
- Ensure that the Head Teacher is kept fully informed of any concerns.

- Develop effective procedures to work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- Decide upon the appropriate level of response to specific concerns about a child e.g. discuss with parents, or refer to the Bridge Partnership.
- Liaise and work with Salford's the Bridge Partnership over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Ensure that accurate safeguarding records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place, marked 'Strictly Confidential' and are passed securely should the child transfer to a new provision. The originating school should consider whether it needs to retain a copy of the records (for example, if a sibling continues to attend the school). If a copy is retained the reason for this should be recorded.
- Submit reports to, and ensure the school's attendance at, child protection conferences contributing to decision making.
- Ensure the school's delivery of actions planned to safeguard the child (e.g. through core group participation).
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns, including notifying Salford's Referral, Investigation and Assessment Team when there is an unexplained absence of more than two days for a child who is the subject of a child protection plan.
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support and advice in respect of concerns about the child's welfare.

Designated Looked After Children Lead

- 3.4 Governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academy schools must appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training. (refer to the Looked After Children Policy and Procedures for more detail)
- 3.5 The Designated Looked After Children Lead needs to work in partnership with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Virtual School Head to ensure the safeguarding vulnerabilities for Looked After Children are appropriately met. In addition the Virtual School Head receives pupil premium plus additional funding based on the latest published numbers of children looked after in the authority. In maintained schools and academies the Looked After Children Designated Lead should work with the virtual school head to discuss how that funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.

Named Governor for Child Protection

- 3.6 The role of the Named Governor is key to ensuring that the governing body fulfils its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children. The Named Governor should therefore ensure that the school:

- Has an effective safeguarding children policy in place and follows local procedures. Policies should be reviewed annually.
- Recruits staff and volunteers in line with safer recruitment processes.
- Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff and volunteers.
- Has a designated senior member of staff for dealing with safeguarding children issues.
- Accesses appropriate safeguarding children training for **all** staff, in line with statutory requirements.
- Provides regular quality assurance reports to the governing body in relation to policy, procedures, audits and Section 11 statutory requirements.
- Liaises with the Headteacher to ensure that deficiencies in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.

Headteacher

- 3.7 The Headteacher has prime responsibility for leading the school in fulfilling the ethos and policies set down by the governing body, including those set out above in the responsibilities for the Named Governor.
- 3.8 In such a role the Headteacher will ensure that safeguarding is central to whole school policy and practice, embedded in the delivery of the curriculum and in all systems for managing the school.
- 3.9 Part of the means of demonstrating such leadership is in attending SSCB training on a regular basis and at least every 3 years. Such leadership is also demonstrated by embedding safeguarding awareness into the school's organisational development and training programmes.

4. Procedures – Early Intervention

Policies - We follow the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures adopted by SSCB. The procedures provide a framework within which all agencies and professionals can work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people across Greater Manchester.

<http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com>

We recommend that you [register for alerts](#) to automatically receive notification when the manual is updated. You can also [subscribe](#) to receive free Policy Briefings or Practice Guides.

We take account of local supporting pathway guidance and additional policies from Salford Safeguarding Children's Board.

www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/pathwayguidance
www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/policiesprocedures

- 4.1 It is very important that practitioners intervene as early as possible if a child or young person has additional needs and services can help in meeting these needs. Such action can help prevent problems becoming child protection concerns. The CAF is a tool for the early help assessment of need at level 2 of the Salford Thresholds of Need and Response Model www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/Thresholds.htm

Salford's **Early Help Strategy** sits alongside Thresholds of Need and Response. See www.partnersinsalford.org/earlyhelp

For more about the CAF go to www.salford.gov.uk/caf.htm. Appendix 1 to this document contains a copy of the Thresholds of Need.

- 4.2 The Anti-Bullying Policy ensures that we foster a culture of safety throughout the school where children and young people are able to alert us to any incidents of bullying and be confident that they will be dealt with effectively. The Anti Bullying Policy also enables us to prevent issues escalating to safeguarding concerns. We use mediation as standard throughout any bullying issues to empower victims. Both parties are given support to confront the issues surrounding any bullying behaviour.

5. Procedures – Child Protection

- 5.1 Where it is identified that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the child protection procedures set out by the Salford Safeguarding Children Board.
- 5.2 In implementing the Light Oaks Junior School policies and procedures on Safeguarding and Child Protection the following points should be considered:
- The Headteacher will ensure that the policies relating to safeguarding will be implemented and monitored on an on-going basis with annual evaluation of effectiveness and review. The Review will be presented as an annual item to the governing body.
 - All staff and governors will be kept informed about child protection procedures using a variety of means such as staff meetings, Inset Days, one-to-ones and briefings in various forms.
 - New and/or temporary staff will be made aware of the policy and procedures at induction within school with clarity about how safeguarding fits into whole school policy.
 - As well as teachers all other staff in school, such as Teaching Assistants, administrators, welfare staff, kitchen staff etc will receive the core training on safeguarding and an induction that is specific to their role including knowing what to do if there are child protection concerns.
 - Parents will be informed of the school's duties and responsibilities under the policy and procedures in a range of ways that reflects diverse ability to use methods of communication. Therefore as well as the use of general methods (such as a Statement in the School brochure or information pack; website features; one-to-one conversations; use of audio facilities etc) consideration should also be given to the ability of parents to access these. For example a notice of the availability of the policy could be displayed in the reception area.

An Overview of Light oaks Junior School Child Protection Procedures can be found in Appendix 1

6. Training and Support

6.1 Our school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the nominated governor for Child Protection attend training relevant to their role on at least an annual basis including email, e-bulletins, staff meetings, Whole School Safeguarding Training and Multi Agency Child Protection training within this timescale.'

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- All new staff will receive induction in safeguarding and child protection – both to enable them to understand and follow school based procedures, as soon as is practicably possible after they start work through the SSCB. All staff will be updated at least annually on safeguarding procedures and updates; they are all required to read and follow the latest version of the Keeping Children Safe in Education advice; local SSCB training is procured every 18 months in accordance with local advice. The DSL will induct new staff in safeguarding procedures and will train staff as appropriate; the SSCB will also train staff as necessary. Who will receive child protection training. Governors will also be invited to whole school training sessions.
 - Staff will be kept informed about current and relevant child protection issues through updates at staff meetings; and individually as necessary.
 - Staff can contact any organisation outlined in this document for outside support.

Prescribed Whole School and Designated Safeguarding Lead Safeguarding Training Requirements

6.2 There is an agreed set of prescribed training requirements in Salford for school staff, as follows:

6.3 **All School Staff** – All school staff who do not have designated lead responsibility for child protection are required to undertake SSCB approved training to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people every 18 months.

This is currently available through the Whole School Safeguarding Service Level Agreement (SLA) purchased through The School Workforce Development Officer in the Human Resources Corporate Business Team.

As safeguarding is 'everybody's' responsibility then all staff in the school should know who to contact if they are concerned about a child or young person so it is important to ensure all new staff receive appropriate training and induction so that they clearly understand their roles and responsibilities².

6.4 **Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead and Deputy(s)** – As a minimum the Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead and Deputies should attend the SSCB 2 day Foundation Course preferably prior or as soon as possible after beginning the role of Designated Person.

The Foundation Training can be refreshed after a period of 2 years with the one day SSCB Refresher course. Depending upon the circumstances of the school, Ofsted may require that the Designated Person(s) attend the Refresher course

Keeping Children Safe In Education – Statutory Guidance September 2016

Designated Safeguarding Leads are required to keep their knowledge and skills up to date on an annual basis. At Light oaks Junior School, the Designated Safeguarding Leads attend training regularly throughout the year. A log of this is kept in the safeguarding file located in the main office.

The Whole School Safeguarding SLA delivers termly, SSCB approved, two hour seminars which provide suitable updates for designated persons to refresh skills and knowledge. (Schools must have purchased the Whole School Safeguarding SLA to eligible to attend these seminars)

After attending the Foundation Course (or equivalent) the Designated Lead should also consider accessing the following courses as relevant to the circumstances of the school, in line with SSCB annual priorities and national priorities.

- Attachment
- CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and Early Help
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Communicating with children
- Core group
- E-safety
- Domestic abuse
- Self Harm
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Neglect
- Parental mental health
- Parental substance use
- Rapid response to a child death
- Sexual abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Preventing radicalisation/WRAP workshop
- Equality and Diversity
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs and Youth Violence
- Witchcraft and Spiritual Possession
- Trafficking and Modern Slavery
- Safeguarding healthy relationships
- Any additional training or events relating to serious case reviews*

SSCB recommend that the Named Governor for Safeguarding at least accesses basic awareness training and additional training relevant to their role.

For the latest SSCB courses, seminars and e-learning courses please visit:
<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/sscbtraining.htm>.

7. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

7.1 Information sharing and Confidentiality are issues which need to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection.

- Parents, governors and every adult working in or with the school understands the need for and basic principles regarding confidentiality, as this is stated during conversations which have confidential content. Induction for staff and Governors also addresses this issue.
- All staff have been trained and are aware that they should never guarantee confidentiality to a child. If a child is at risk of harm or harm is suspected, information disclosed must be shared and the child should be made aware of this. This should be carried out with sensitivity, and the child should be made aware that they will not be hurt as a result of their disclosure.
- Information from a disclosure should be passed on to the Designated Person / Head Teacher as soon as possible (see procedures appendix 1), who will take a lead on information sharing. This information will not be passed on to the alleged perpetrator without advice from the relevant safeguarding advisor.
- Concerns regarding a child should be directed to the agencies outlined on page one of this policy.

7.2 Practitioners work together best to safeguard children where there is an exchange of relevant information between them. Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (*Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8*). However, fears about sharing information **cannot** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties **but may be waived in the circumstances set out below.**

7.3 In some circumstances, achieving consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of a child dictate that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

7.4 Where consent cannot be obtained to share information or consent is refused or where seeking it may undermine the prevention, detection, or prosecution of a crime the practitioner must judge from the facts whether there is enough public interest to justify sharing information. A concern in relation to protecting a child from significant harm, promoting the welfare of children, protecting adults from serious harm or preventing crime and disorder are all well within public interest.

7.5 The Public Interest test means that practitioners must decide whether sharing information is a necessary and proportionate response to the need to protect the child in question. The decision making process must weigh up what might happen if the information is shared against what might happen if it is not shared. Schools should identify their scheme

of delegation for such decision making. However it should also be clear that every practitioner has a professional responsibility to share information without delay when there are concerns about harm to a child.

7.6 Further guidance on information sharing can be found at:

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

8. Records and monitoring

8.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records, or parts thereof, should be shared with other agencies. All records relating to individual Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns must be held securely with limited access and kept separate from the child/young person's academic file. Light oaks Junior School uses an encrypted web-based safeguarding package (C-POMS) which uses USB key encryption and password protection. Only the Designated Safeguarding Leads have full access to this system; the Inclusions Manager/Deputy Head and the SENCo both have restricted access via the same encrypted USB key access.

- Past concerns for children, and what happened in response to the concerns can be very important information for staff members who may have concerns for the child at a later time.
- Record Retention – Child Protection records must be retained by all educational establishments until the child's 25th Birthday, unless the records are transferred to a new establishment when the child transfers to a new provision.
- At the point pupil/student transferring to another educational establishment, all formal records should be sent within 15 working days
- The originating school should consider whether it needs to retain a copy of the records (for example, if a sibling continues to attend the school). If a copy is retained the reason for this should be recorded.
- All staff are trained to log concerns via the CPOMS online reporting software. Staff are also encouraged to speak directly to the DSL about any concerns as soon as possible. If they cannot access the CPOMS site, staff talk directly to the DSL who will log the concern. Only the DSLs can access information stored on the site.
- All records are kept securely. Details about staff training are kept in the Safeguarding file which is kept securely in the main office in a locked cupboard. Keys are kept by the DSLs.
- The DSLs make decisions about the concerns raised by staff. They meet weekly to discuss pupils raised as vulnerable or with concerns. All pupils for whom a concern is raised is monitored by the DSLs during these meetings. Referrals are made in consultation between the two DSLs to ensure vigour. Each child who is raised as a concern is monitored in a different way according to the concern raised.

- Parents are informed if their children are being monitored if the DSLs feel that this is necessary. We do not wish to unduly concern parents, but will inform them of concerns which need to be addressed.
- All staff are trained under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that any enquiry about records held on pupils should be referred to the DSL/Headteacher. They will then follow the data protection policy ratified by the Governing Board.
- If a child transfers or leaves the school, relevant information is passed to the receiving school, including safeguarding records which must be shared under the relevant legislation. Other records are passed with the consent of parents. All records for children are kept electronically until the child's 25th birthday.

8.2 Anti Bullying incidents are recorded on the CPOMS software.

9. Child protection conferences

- 9.1 The Child Protection conference is a meeting to discuss concerns about the care of a child. Its main purpose is to see whether the child is at risk of harm and, if so, to agree what needs to be done to reduce this risk. The Conference can decide to make the child the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- 9.2 Children are made the subject of a Child Protection Plan when they are thought to be at risk of harm. This might be from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. It helps to keep a check on the work being done with these children. The Plan contains basic details of the children and their families. It is held securely by Children's Social Care and information from it is only given to authorised people.
- 9.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will advise school staff on the preparation of reports for child protection conferences, participation in core groups and carrying out specific tasks with the child and family as identified in the child protection plan.
- 9.4 Further advice and support for school staff on participating in child protection meetings is also available from the Salford Children's Services Safeguarding Unit on 0161 603 4350

10. Supporting pupils at risk

- 10.1 Our school recognises that children who experience harm through abuse, neglect or through witnessing domestic violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. Our wellbeing curriculum and targeted interventions from trained staff and therapists can support pupils who need help.
- 10.2 Our school fosters a culture of safety through the development of an Anti Bullying Policy where children and young people feel confident to report any incidents of bullying including cyberbullying, homophobic, biphobic and transgender bullying
- 10.3 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant. In response there may be steps taken to consider suspension or exclusion from school. Such steps should be taken in the context of considering the needs of the child; where

appropriate a common assessment ('CAF') should be carried out (with the consent of the parent/carer and/or young person)

- 10.4 It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support and that other children are protected from harm.
- 10.5 This school will endeavour to support pupils through:
- (a) The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
 - (b) The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
 - (c) The implementation of school behaviour management policies;
 - (d) The implementation of individualised, targeted wellbeing and therapeutic interventions;
 - (e) A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
 - (f) Regular liaison with other practitioners and agencies that support the pupils and their families, in-line with appropriate information sharing protocols;
 - (g) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships (i.e. to work in partnership) with parents/carers whenever possible and so long as it is in the child's best interests to do so;
 - (h) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- 10.6 Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Our Governing Board are committed to ensure their safeguarding and child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and in this group of children. This can include:
- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
 - children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs;
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers can negatively impact disclosure and remediation.
- 10.7 It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse, children may also be particularly vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- 10.8 We are committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Through the implementation of our school Statement of Core of Values (non negotiables) the pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

There is a current threat from terrorism in the UK and this can include the exploitation of vulnerable young people, aiming to involve them in terrorism or to be active in supporting terrorism. All staff seek have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into Terrorism and draw upon The Prevent Duty Guidance, DfE Guidance

“Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2015”; and specifically DCSF Resources “Learning Together to be Safe”, “Prevent: Resources Guide”, “Tackling Extremism in the UK”, and DfE’s “Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People”.

When operating this policy, we will use the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism which is:

‘Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members in our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas’.

Staff will have training that gives them knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideologies. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent but non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists can exploit.

All staff seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including but not restricted to those linked to Islam ideology, Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology etc. Concerns should be referred to the Designated Child Protection Person who has local contact details for Prevent and Channel referrals. They will also consider whether circumstances require the police to be contacted.

Concerns should be referred to the Designated Child Protection Person who has local contact details for Prevent and Channel referrals. They will also consider whether circumstances require the police to be contacted. <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/asg-extremism.htm> provides further information.

The Department for Education has launched a helpline for anyone concerned about a **child who may be at risk of extremism**, or about extremism within an organisation working with children and young people. Email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk. Telephone: 020 7340 7264.

- 10.9 Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding person/lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the

woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures

- 10.10 Children and young people who are privately fostered can also sometimes require additional support. For more information about this see: <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/privatefostering.htm>

Other specific safeguarding issues are:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- bullying including cyberbullying
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking.

11. Safer schools, safer staff

- School staff will be advised about ensuring safe practice. All staff should be directed to consider the information at www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/safepractice.htm. This includes information about the importance of safer recruitment and best practice in providing a safe environment for children and young people.
- The school will make available to school staff information about ‘counselling’ and/or giving advice to children/young people about sexual matters.
 - The school will ensure opportunities for staff to share perspectives and experiences with practitioners from other agencies³.
 - The school will recruit and select safe staff in compliance with DfE guidance and with the procedures set down by the Independent Safeguarding Authority.
 - The school will follow statutory guidance on disqualification by association.
 - Staff will be made aware of the current SSCB procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff.
 - All staff know that if they have concerns about the Headteacher or other members of staff, they can voice their concerns to the Deputy Head teacher, the Chair of Governors or the DSL. If they do not feel able to share with members of the school community, they can speak to the Local Area Designated Officer (**LADO**) tel: **0161 603 4350 / 4445**

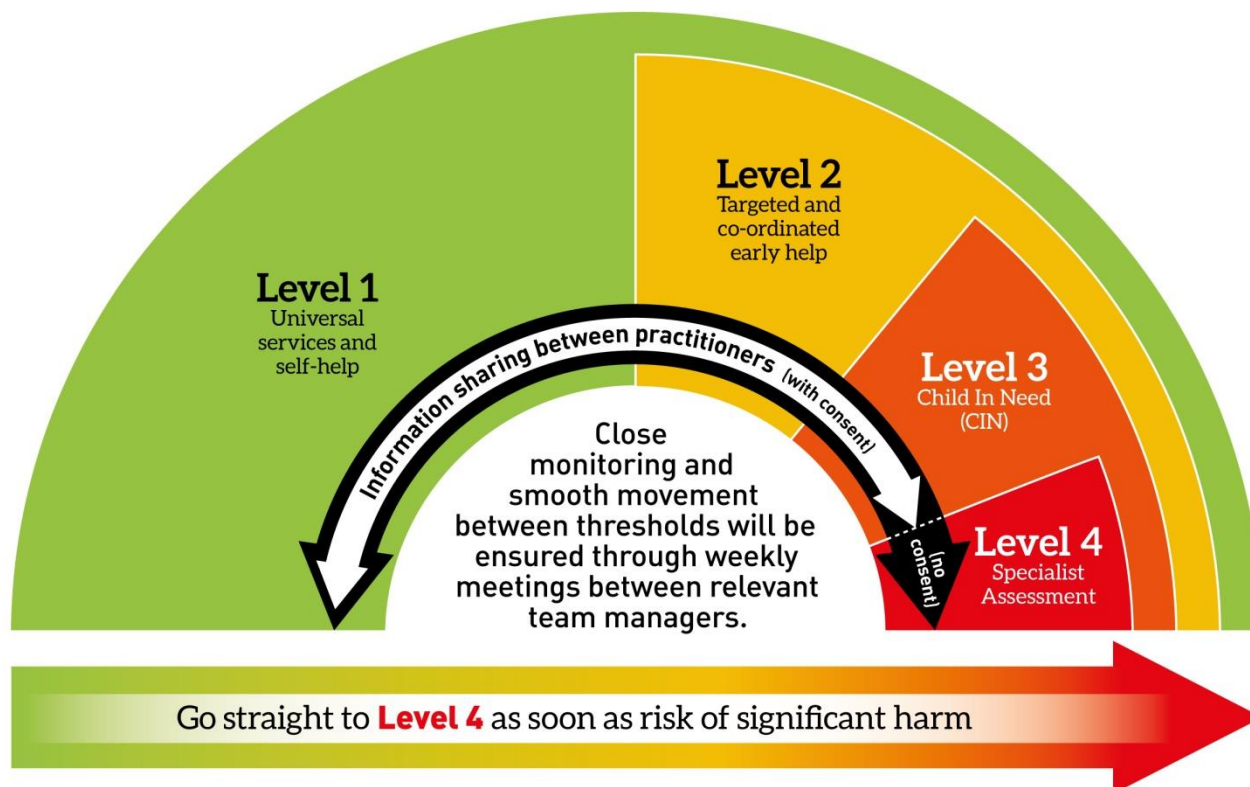
³ Child protection and safeguarding are multi-agency responsibilities. These responsibilities are best discharged when practitioners have a good understanding of each other’s role. Such opportunities can be provided by SSCB training or, for example, by schools arranging for occasional meetings with other agencies in their locality.

- The following basic ground rules applied with professional judgement will promote confidence and trust in staff:
 - **Respect privacy without compromising safety** - when 1:1 meetings with children or young people are necessary, then if possible, have these in a room with visual access or the door open and/or with another adult in a nearby area.
 - **Think carefully about physical contact** - children and young people may need comfort when they are upset, but offering physical comfort must be carefully judged. Even with younger children, think about the context and circumstances before responding to a child's wishes for physical comfort. Show respect and ask the child or young person first.
 - **Restraint or physical intervention is a last resort, only to be used when necessary to protect a child or others** - your school and education authority guidelines on restraint or physical intervention should be observed, and in all situations, every effort should be made to defuse a situation before taking any action physically.
 - **Dignity and privacy** - Staff responsible for the personal care of disabled pupils should take care to provide privacy for the child or young person and respect his/her preferences for care, while ensuring other staff are aware of the care activities.
 - **Appropriate relationships with children and young people** - if a child or young person is becoming inappropriately attached to a member of staff, or a member of staff is developing feelings for the child or young person not appropriate to a professional relationship, then the advice of a senior colleague or the Head should be sought.
 - **Be aware of language** - Staff should be aware that remarks which some children and young people understand as fair and humorous can be viewed by others as hurtful and embarrassing. In particular, staff should avoid using humiliation or sarcasm as a form of discipline or to assert authority. Staff should model respect to their pupils.
 - **Share concerns.** A climate of openness in school is essential for everyone to work well together. The careless actions of one member of staff can affect the whole school, so all staff should report any concerns about their colleagues to a senior manager, for everyone's sake.
 - **Promote personal safety education** - There are many opportunities in school to enable children and young people to learn skills and knowledge to help keep them safe. This can take place within personal, social and health education, but many other activities help children and young people to build their resilience.
 - **Provide opportunities** for children and young people to:
 - Be aware of and able to weigh up risks and consequences
 - Be skilled in asserting their needs and personal boundaries
 - Be practiced in responding to others about behaviours they do not like
 - Be confident and thoroughly understand their own importance

Appendix 1

<http://www.salford.gov.uk/thresholds.htm>

Salford Thresholds of Need and Response



If you are worried about a child contact The Bridge Partnership on **0161 603 4500** or email **worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk**

Appendix 2

School Child Protection Procedures

1. What Should Staff/Volunteers Do If They Have Concerns About A Child or Young Person in School?

Practitioners in schools who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of harm from abuse or neglect should pass any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school; this should *always* occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours (see Flowchart at Appendix 3):

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

Zandra Wilkinson

Louise Buckley

It is these senior colleagues who are responsible for taking action where the welfare or safety of children or young people is concerned. If staff are uncertain about whether their concerns are indeed 'child protection' then a discussion with their Designated Person/Lead will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action. The multi agency Bridge Partnership team can also be consulted, where you will be able to speak to a qualified social worker if necessary for support and advice.

Staff should never:

- Do nothing/assume that another agency or practitioner will act or is acting.
- Attempt to resolve the matter themselves alone.

What should the Designated Safeguarding Lead consider right at the outset?

- Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (By definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the *priority / level and immediacy* of risk / need?)
- Can the level of need identified be met:
 - ♦ In or by the school or by accessing universal services
 - ♦ By undertaking a Common Assessment (CAF), without referral to the Bridge Partnership
 - ♦ By working with the child, parents and colleagues?
- What resources are available to the practitioner and the school and what are their limitations?
- Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to the Bridge Partnership which requests that an assessment of need be undertaken? (Section 17 Child in Need referral)
- Is the level and/or likelihood of risk such that a child protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm? (Section 47 Child Protection referral)
- What information is available re: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?
- What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be? For example has the parent/carer denied that there is a problem and failed to co-operate with the school in resolving the issue?
- Who do I/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?
- Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support?

- If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take? (e.g. time-limited monitoring plan, discussion with parents or other practitioners, recording etc)

2. Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Rules of confidentiality mean that it may not always be possible or appropriate to feedback to staff who report concerns to them. Such information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only and the Designated Lead will decide which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

3. Thresholds for Referral to the Bridge Partnership

In making a decision about whether a referral to the Bridge Partnership may be required, there are two thresholds for (and their criteria) and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

(i) Is this a Child In Need?

Under section 17 (s.17(10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is in need if:

- (a) He is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority;
- (b) His health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- (c) He is disabled.

(ii) Is this a Child Protection Matter?

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- (a) is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- (b) is in Police Protection; or where they have
- (c) reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold' that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A practitioner making a child protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of 'need' and when to refer.

4. Making Referrals to CSC (Guidance for the Designated Child Protection Person)

(i) Child in Need/Section 17 Referrals

- Where a Common Assessment (CAF) already exists, the DCPP should send this with the referral to the Bridge Partnership.
- This is a request for assessment/support/services and, as such, you **must obtain the consent** of the parent(s) (and child/young person where appropriate). This should also be identified on the CAF.

- Where a parent/carer/young person refuses to consent, you should make clear your ongoing plans and responsibilities in respect of support, monitoring etc, and the possibility of a child protection referral at some point in future if things deteriorate or do not improve. (This is not about threats or saying that this is inevitable but about openness and transparency in dealings with parents).

(ii) Child Protection/Section 47 Referral

- Make a telephone call to the Bridge Partnership and forward for consideration.
- If a CAF exists this should be forwarded to the Bridge Partnership as soon as possible and certainly within 48 hours.
- You **do not require the consent** of a parent or child/young person to make a child protection referral
- A parent should, **under most circumstances, be informed** by the referrer that a child protection referral is to be made. **The criteria for not informing parents are:**
 - (a) Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child(ren); or
 - (b) Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede an investigation that may need to be undertaken;
 - (c) Because there would be an undue delay caused by seeking consent which would not serve the child's best interests.

Fear of jeopardising a working relationship with parents because of a need to refer is **not** sufficient justification for not making a referral nor for not telling them that you need to refer. Lack of openness will do little to foster ongoing trust, particularly as the source of referrals will be disclosed to parents except in a limited number of circumstances. If you feel that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents then you should seek advice and/or make this clear on the CAF and in any telephone contact with the Bridge Partnership.

5. Bridge Partnership Responses to Referrals and Timescales

In response to a referral, the Bridge Partnership may decide to:

- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
- Refer on to another agency who can provide services;
- Convene a Strategy Meeting ;
- Provide support services under Section 17;
- Undertake an social work assessment(completed within 45 working days);
- Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference (within 15 working days of a Strategy Meeting)
- Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
- Make an application to court for an Order;
- Take no further action.

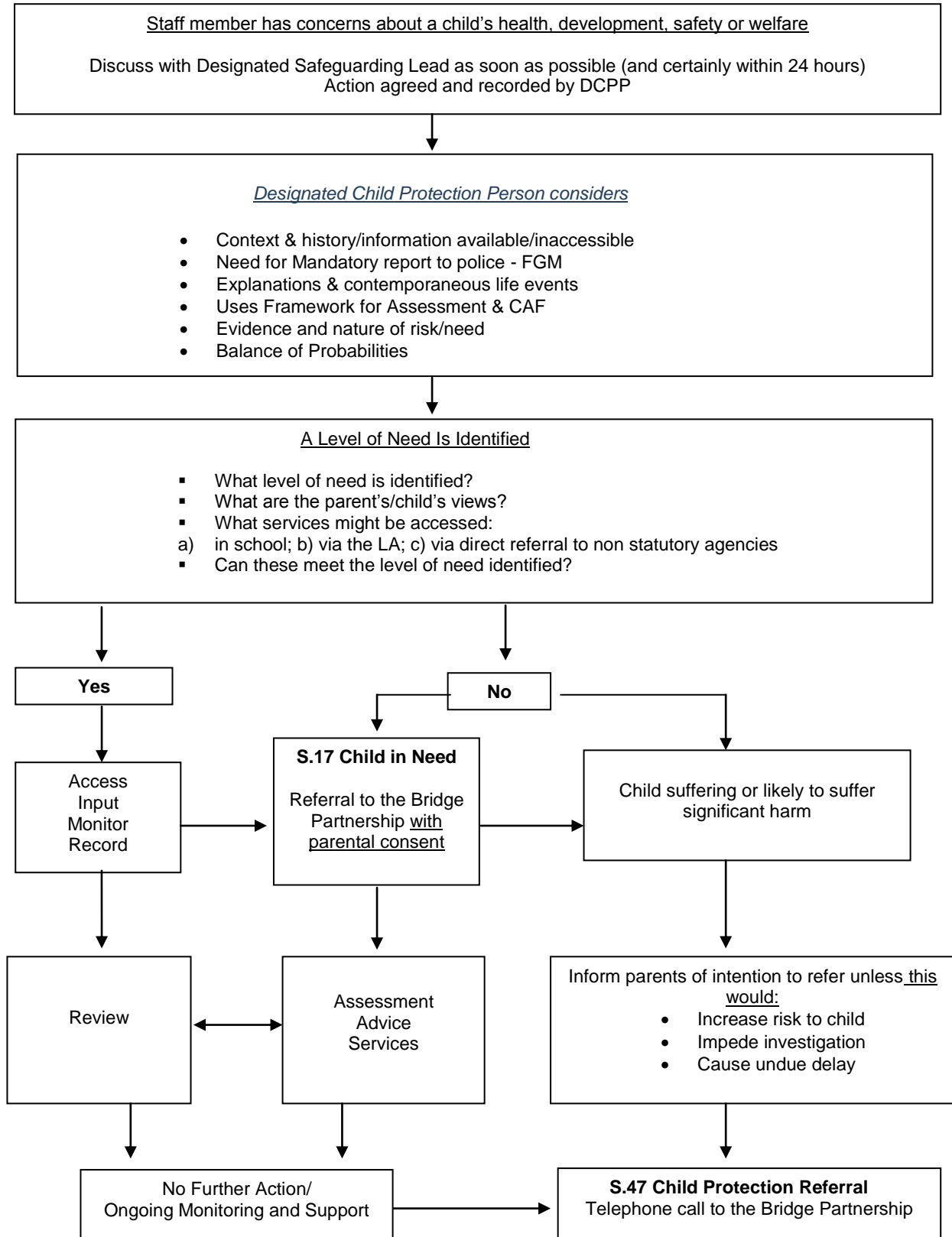
6. Feedback from the Bridge Partnership

The Bridge Partnership has 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. A Designated Safeguarding Lead should expect to receive written confirmation about action following any referral within 7 days. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent child protection referral, and where this places school/a child or children in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to a Duty Social Worker, or the relevant Team Manager.

7. Risk Assessment 'Checklist'

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the Working Together 2015 definitions of abuse?
- Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
- Am I wrongly attributing something to impairment?
- Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could/do impact upon the level of risk?
- Are any injuries or incidents acute, cumulative, episodic?
- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs wishes and feelings?
- Parent's/carer's attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to cooperate?
- What does the child mean to the family?
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention?
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child (I.e. resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses?
- When and how is the child at risk?
- How imminent is any likely risk?
- How grave are the possible consequences?
- How safe is this child?
- What are the risk assessment options?
- What are the risk management options?
- What is the interim plan?

Appendix 3: taking action on child welfare/protection concerns in school



Appendix 4: Responding to a disclosure

If a child wants to confide in you, you **SHOULD**

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- Make sure that the child is ok ;
- Make a careful record of what was said

You should **NEVER**

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children;
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Designated Child Protection Person).

Children with communication difficulties, or who use alternative / augmentative communication systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- Opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).
- Use of signers or interpreters

Recordings should

- State who was present, time, date and place;
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head Teacher immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

What information do you need to obtain?

- Schools have **no investigative role** in child protection (Police and the Bridge Partnership will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses – leave this to them!);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, what, where and when;**

- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is 'might this be a child protection matter?'
- If the answer is yes, or if you're not sure, record and pass on immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead /Head Teacher/line manager or consult directly with the Bridge Partnership.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- **Never** ask closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc e.g. top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only '**minimal prompts**' such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that'
- Timescales are very important: '**When was the last time this happened?**' is an important question.

What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- Is there a place in school which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc;
- We need to think carefully about our own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- Be prepared to answer the 'what happens next' question;
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we 'know that [child.....] tells lies';
- Think about how you might react if a child DID approach you in school. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity;
- Think about what support **you** could access if faced with this kind of situation in school.

Appendix 4 – What is abuse and neglect?

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. **Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child.** Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Definitions of child abuse

There are four types of child abuse.

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Physical abuse

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

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

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

in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Signs of abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. Sometimes the signs are not obvious and sometimes signs that appear to be indicative of abuse can be due to other causes. Therefore it is very important that you use these signs to help you think about the concerns you have and how you will describe these when making a referral or consulting with the Bridge Partnership team.

These definitions and indicators only serve as a guide to assist you. Remember that children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more is not necessarily proof that abuse is occurring. There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as bereavement, significant changes in family relationships, including the birth of a new baby in the family or problems between parents/carers.

It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. You do, however, have a responsibility and duty to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child. The social worker or police officer will always want to understand your concerns about the child in the context of the child's development and relationships.

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse and to provide the necessary information when reporting your concerns.

Physical Abuse

Most children in daily life will collect cuts and bruises. But each child is different and any perceived injuries should be interpreted in light of:

- the child's medical and social history
- the child's developmental stage
- the explanation given for the injury

Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and often on the front of the body.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body that are unexplained or not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body especially in clusters and in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games
- Injuries which have not received medical attention or there has been a delay in getting medical attention (although note that burn injuries are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place some time later)
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Multiple burns

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- fear of further enquiries being made
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather, or to participate in games or swimming
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home or school

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify, as there may be no outward physical signs.

There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow – but this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care.

Children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers.

Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour or presentation which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Negative statements about self

- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress
- Reporting parental violence or discord (i.e. exposure to domestic violence)

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is known to take place against children and young people of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present.

Children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

It is not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- repeated urinary infections
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour or presentation which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- any allegation by the child of sexual abuse
- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares and severe or persistent sleep disturbance
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge beyond their age or developmental level; preoccupation with sexual matters
- sexual activity through drawings, language or play
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money

- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise but it has some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant or frequent hunger, sometimes stealing food
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or constantly underweight
- inappropriate clothing for the conditions.
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Untreated illnesses, injuries or physical complaints

Changes in behaviour or presentation which can also indicate neglect may include:

- frequent tiredness
- overeating
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

N.B Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016' contains additional information about specific forms of abuse