

ST ANDREW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
AND NURSERY



**CHILD PROTECTION  
AND  
SAFEGUARDING  
POLICY  
& PROCEDURES**

**2018**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Our Aims and Our Mission**

At St Andrew's we strive to enable all our children to appreciate the value and application of education in their lives. We aim for every child to experience success and help them recognise their importance as an individual.

#### **Our pupils will:**

- be motivated to reach challenging targets across the curriculum, questioning and embracing our evolving world
- understand how to develop and engage as independent learners or collaboratively as part of a team
- be able to make informed choices to develop and maintain a healthy body, mind and spirit
- be confident and proud to achieve
- be respectful and responsible individuals who make positive contributions to the world around them

#### **We will provide:**

- a rich and varied curriculum which is relevant and inspiring to all our pupils in a Christian setting
- inspirational teaching which incorporates creative activities and investigative/problem solving approaches to learning
- an enriching programme of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities
- engaging learning environments which are well resourced, interactive and provide access to technologies
- a success culture based upon support, praise, encouragement and challenge to reach high personal standards
- an ethos of respect and responsibility to others and the environment
- an effective partnership between school, home, church and community

We work hard to make sure that our children are happy, well supported and play their part in school life

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. We know that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

## **SCHOOL COMMITMENT**

At St Andrew's CE Primary School and Nursery 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 who are suffering significant harm.

Our school will therefore:

- a. Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to in a calm and safe environment.

- b. Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c. Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and / or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse. As well as all classes having a 'Worry box' in which any concerns can be posted.
- 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.
- e. Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.
- f. Actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

At St Andrew's we provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment in a Church of England Christian setting. We create an atmosphere of mutual respect and co-operation between governors, staff, children, their families and the wider community. This enables all members of the school to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to grow in understanding and to achieve their full potential in an ever changing world.

At St Andrew's CE Primary School & Nursery child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and, as such, this policy makes reference to and is consistent with those other policies and procedures which address broader safeguarding issues. <sup>1</sup>

#### **Important Sources of Further Information**

1. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2018) Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education (2011) and former DCSF Guidance, and makes clear roles and responsibilities of education professionals, establishments and organisations<sup>1</sup>.  
All staff in education settings should have read and have an understanding of at least Part 1 of this statutory guidance.
2. The Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children procedures can be found on the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board website [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) and make explicit what action should be taken at the point of referral to the Multi Agency Screening Service (MASS) or the police and thereafter<sup>2</sup>
3. Working Together To Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government, 2018);
4. What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (DfE, 2015)
5. In addition schools/colleges should have regard to specific guidance given by the Secretary of State under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes the most up to date guidance on the requirement for staff working with children/young people to have enhanced DBS checks and Safe Recruitment and Selection processes in place.

<sup>2</sup> The Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children procedures are available electronically and can be accessed via the RBSCB web site: [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org)

## The Welfare of the Child

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. Every child has an entitlement to feel secure and protected. They have a right to expect professionals with whom they come into contact to act upon any disclosures in the area of child abuse. The close contact that teachers and other working in school have with children means they have a crucial role to play in protecting them. These adults are in a key position to recognise and make any referral of any outward signs of failure to develop. St Andrew's fully recognises the contribution it makes to Child Protection.

There are three main elements to our policy:

- **Prevention** through the positive school atmosphere teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils
- **Protection** by following procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- **Support** pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school, community education staff and governors. Learning support assistants, lunchtime organisers, office staff, caretakers as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school.

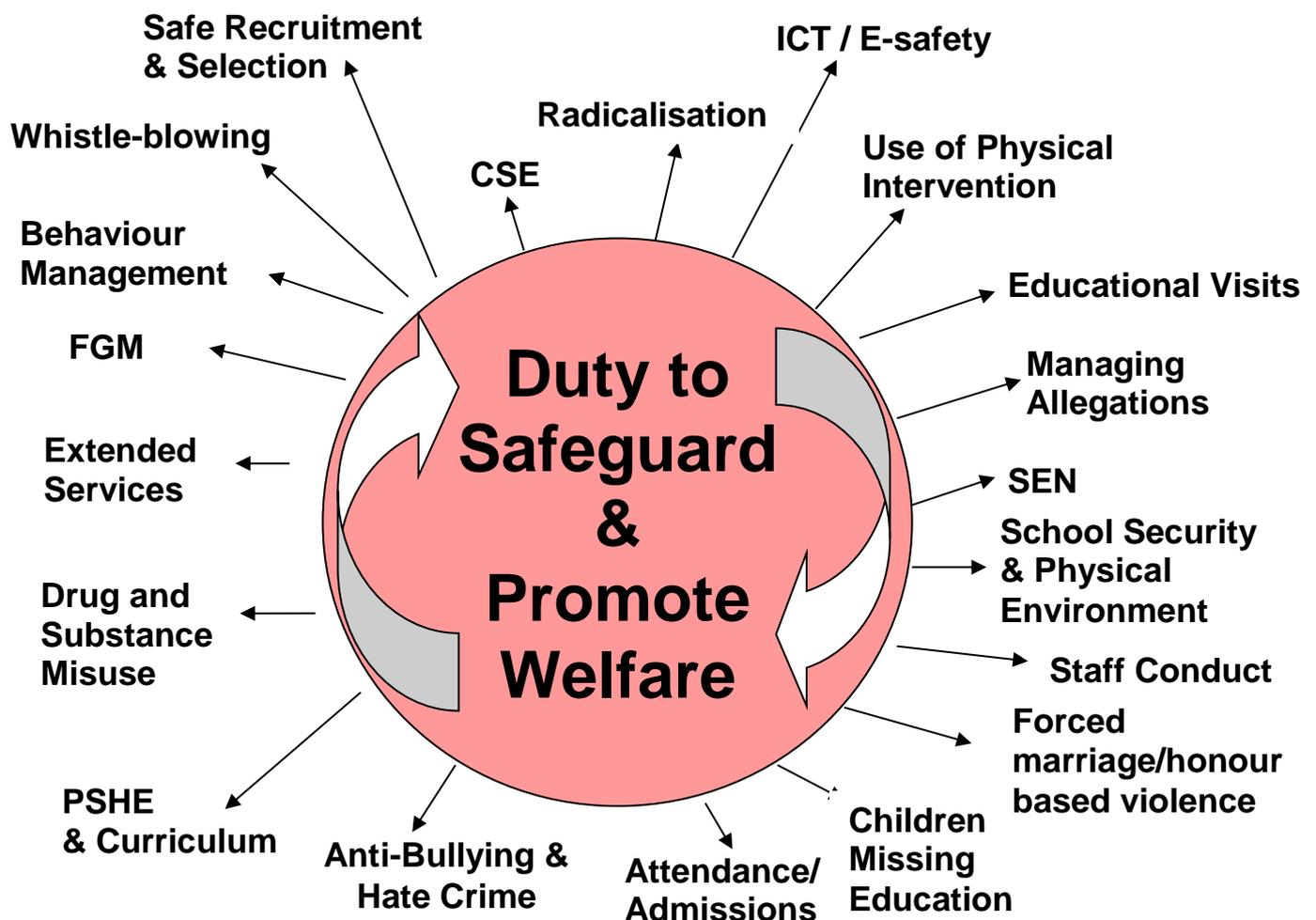
Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example 'sexting' and accessing pornography
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic violence
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, learners and vulnerable adults from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- children's and learners' health and safety and well-being, including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety<sup>3</sup> and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, taking into account the local context.

## Child Protection



<sup>3</sup> The term 'online safety' reflects a widening range of issues associated with technology and a user's access to content, contact with others and behavioural issues.

## **Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty (DfE June 2015)**

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from child sexual exploitation, drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

The Prevent strategy aims to protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. While it remains rare for children and young people to become involved in terrorist activity, young people from an early age can be exposed to terrorist & extremist influences or prejudiced views. We recognise that as with other forms of safeguarding strategies, early intervention is always preferable. Our school is committed to working with other local partners, families and communities, and we will play a key role in ensuring young people and their communities are safe from the threat of terrorism.

We also recognise that our school has a duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. Prevent can work within both violent and non-violent extremism arenas and can include topics such as hate crime, racism, bullying, on line safety and extreme political views.

### **Our School is committed to:**

- Establishing a single point of contact in terms of safeguarding
- Assess risk of students being drawn into terrorism
- Develop an action plan to reduce the risk
- Train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism
- Refer vulnerable people to Channel
- Prohibit extremist speakers and events
- Manage access to extremist material - ICT filters
- Be confident about British Values

We recognise that some young people, who are vulnerable to extreme views, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. We also recognise that their behaviour may be challenging at times and that some may cause offence or harm to others.

We will therefore always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils by:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting, and
- identifying children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to extreme views / radicalisation and taking appropriate action in accordance with the schools Safeguarding procedures with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting.

- making appropriate referrals to the Local Authority for early intervention and support where necessary
- ensuring that staff member(s) or governor(s) responsible for safeguarding are kept fully aware of their responsibilities by attending relevant training and briefings
- letting staff, parents and pupils know how to voice their concerns
- responding to any allegations appropriately in accordance with appropriate school policies and procedures

**Further departmental advice available at:**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf)

### **Female Genital Mutilation - Mandatory Reporting Duty**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place a statutory duty upon teachers<sup>10</sup>, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, 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.

<sup>10</sup> Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides a definition for the term ‘teacher’.

The Mandatory reporting duty commenced in October 2015 and teachers must report cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out to the police on the non-emergency 101 number. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school/college’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. Further guidance available below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/526153/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_guidance\\_from\\_5\\_September\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526153/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_guidance_from_5_September_2016.pdf)

### **Children Missing Education (DfE statutory guidance) January 2015**

St Andrew’s follows Rochdale Council CME guidance which outlines Rochdale Borough Council’s systems for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing from education and the steps taken to identify those at risk.

In accordance with guidance, a child missing from education is defined as someone of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, not being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, in independent schools or in alternative provision) or who has been out of any educational provision for four weeks or more.

There are a number of reasons why children fall out of the education system, including when they:

- fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- cease to attend, failing to return after exclusion or withdrawal; or
- fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. after moving to a new Local Authority).

Difficulties can also arise when children enter or leave provision where information is not routinely exchanged (e.g. between Independent Schools, Voluntary Organisations) or where arrangements straddle more than one Local Authority and where moves are between different countries.

### **Forced Marriage & Honour Based Violence**

Forced marriage is a human rights abuse. It can constitute both child abuse and sexual abuse. The United Nations considers it a form of trafficking, sexual slavery, and exploitation. Some, however, still see it as a private, personal, domestic, family, religious, or cultural issue.

A clear distinction must be made between a **forced** marriage and an **arranged** marriage. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and many countries for a very long time. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the child/young person.

Forced marriage, whether a religious or civil ceremony, cannot be justified on religious grounds. Every major faith condemns it and freely given consent is a prerequisite of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh marriages

In forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved. Duress includes both physical and emotional pressure and abuse.

Forced marriage is primarily, but not exclusively, an issue of violence against females. Most cases involve young women and girls aged between 13 and 30, although there is evidence to suggest that as many as 15% of victims are male. The school/college follows Rochdale Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures for cases of dealing with forced marriage for a child/young person under 18 years of age and any individual in school/college who receives information, or has reason to believe that a child/young person is at risk of or subject to a forced marriage, should speak with the DSL in school/college who should then make a CP referral to MASS in line with the procedures.

([http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_force\\_marriage.html](http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_force_marriage.html))

Honour based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

There is a strong commitment from all key partners under the banner of Project Phoenix to improve our collective knowledge and understanding of child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester and to develop a consistent and effective approach to identifying and responding to it.

Therefore Phoenix has agreed to use the definition developed by the Children's Society in collaboration with young people, which is:

***'Someone taking advantage of you sexually, for their own benefit. Through threats, bribes, violence, humiliation, or by telling you that they love you, they will have the power to get you to do sexual things for their own, or other people's benefit or enjoyment (including: touching or kissing private parts, sex, taking sexual photos).'***

As in all cases, concerns that a child may be at risk of sexual exploitation will be discussed with the education establishment's DSL and a decision made as to whether there needs to be consultation with and a CP referral to Rochdale MASS.

Rochdale has a dedicated CSE team - 'Sunrise' based within the MASS and this team tackles sexual exploitation and related harm in the borough of Rochdale.

The team includes professionals from the police, children's social care, sexual health and Early Break.

They provide a safe and confidential environment where young people can go for help, advice and support. Children are offered a range of therapeutic interventions including one-to-one counselling, group-work sessions and drop-in support.

They also remind people about child sexual exploitation, so they know what it is and that it's happening. Working with schools we deliver preventative education programmes and provide specialist training to professionals so they know what signs to look out for.

### **Abuse and harmful behaviour**

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually

touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE, 2018). It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

## **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

### **Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)**

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

### **Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)**

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse.

## **Sexting**

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

## **Initiation/Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

## **Expected action taken from all staff**

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm. It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

### **Gather the Facts**

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

### **Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)**

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

### **Course of action**

If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

If social care and the police intend to pursue this further they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

### **Informing parents**

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible.

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent or even with them (they may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in any way). Where school can evidence they are acting in the best interests of the young person they would not be

criticised, however this would be the case if they actively breached the rights and choices of the young person.

The best way to inform parents is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

### **Points to consider:**

#### **What is the age of the children involved?**

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following)

#### **Where did the incident or incidents take place?**

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

#### **What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?**

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

#### **What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?**

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care.

### **Repetition**

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

### **Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

### **For the young person who has been harmed**

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

### **For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour**

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through a CAF/strengthening families/early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

### **After care**

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

### **Preventative Strategies for Schools and Settings**

For all schools and settings, it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way. Firstly, and most importantly for schools and settings is recognition that peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

This can be supported by ensuring that each school/setting has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This can be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that

tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another.

To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

It is important that signposting is available to young people in the event that they don't feel confident raising an issue to staff or a peer. It is useful to have a resource board with support services on a wide range of issues so young people can seek their own solutions should they wish to. In the same way external services or support programmes could be brought in to talk to young people about specific issues in support of the prevention of peer on peer abuse.

Finally, it is useful to ensure young people are part of changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within schools. Having a school council and pupil voice and encouraging young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour' will go far in helping to create a positive ethos in school and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

## References

Whatis.com <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/cyberbullying>

New Choices Inc <http://newchoicesinc.org/educated/abuse/TDV/def>

This is abuse campaign

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/410010/2015-03-08\\_This\\_is\\_Abuse\\_campaign\\_summary\\_report\\_\\_2\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410010/2015-03-08_This_is_Abuse_campaign_summary_report__2_.pdf)

Stop bullying.gov

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/index.html#types>

EACH resources for LGBT

CEOP

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Media-Centre/Press-releases/2009/What-does-sexting-mean/>

## **Designated Teachers**

Our school will ensure that the Head Teacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Child Protection Person and the nominated governor for Safeguarding/Child Protection attend training relevant to their role annually. The DSL will also attend Multi-Agency Child Protection training within the timescale.

The designated teachers for Safeguarding/child protection at St Andrew's are Mrs J A Rainford the head teacher and Mrs J Hodgson, both of which have had training in these procedures.

The nominated governor is the Chair of Governors (Appendix 1 – Training for designated staff in school)

The main areas of responsibility for designated teachers are:

1. To keep the suffering of the child to a minimum.
2. To ensure all our staff, including non-teaching staff received induction on basis training on Safeguarding/Child Protection (Appendix 2 staff training), know who the designated teachers are and have read the Safeguarding/Child Protection Leaflet (Appendix 3).
3. To ensure all our staff have an awareness of child abuse, the signs and symptoms, and are aware of the procedures to follow that is clearly laid down in the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board Child (RBSCB).
4. To facilitate and support the development of a whole school policy involving all the staff.
5. To advise and co-ordinate action when child abuse is suspected, i.e. to instigate procedures.
6. To maintain secure and confidential records including the use of CPOMS.
7. To pass on appropriate records when a child leaves the school in accordance with data protection.
8. To encourage staff to consider a curricular response to prevention.
9. To ensure that procedures for involving parents are known and followed.
10. To liaise with Social Services and other agencies on matters relating to Child Protection.
11. To offer support to staff who have suspicions about a child, have handled a disclosure, attended a case conference or given evidence in court.
12. To brief members of staff attending case conferences about procedures.
13. To co-ordinate support to the child during and after the implementation of procedures.

## FRAMEWORK

Staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage: referring those concerns to the appropriate staff at St Andrew's using the green school forms initially or CPOMS and then given immediately to a member of SLT who will action as appropriate to the correct organisation. Effectively contributes to the assessment of a child's needs using the Children's Needs and Response Framework and, in particular, using and embedding the Common Assessment Framework as an early intervention assessment tool where the Child Protection threshold is not met. They will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the child's care or behaviour.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of *all* adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB). [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) will provide you with all of the information you need about the local safeguarding board.

Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board adopts the [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures](#).

The Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures provide essential guidance for all agencies and professionals. They ensure that everyone works together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people across Greater Manchester.

All professionals working with children, young people and their families should sign up to the alerts so that they know when procedures have been reviewed or written.

The documents are for professionals who are working with children, young people and families. It helps to identify when a child needs additional support and whether a single or multi agency response is appropriate. [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org)

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

*All* adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures. The names of those carrying these responsibilities in school are the head and Deputy.

The Governing body is accountable for ensuring that the education setting has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this guidance, and for monitoring the school's compliance with them. Neither the governing body, nor individual governors, have a role in dealing with individual cases or a right to know details of cases (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff). The child protection governor champions' child protection issue within the school, liaises with the head teacher about them, and provides information and reports to the governing body. However, it is not appropriate for them to take the lead in dealing with allegations of abuse made against the head teacher. That is the role of the chair of governors or, in the absence of a chair, the vice or deputy chair.

Whether the governing body acts collectively or an individual member takes the lead, it is helpful if all members of the governing body undertake training about child protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

Who is available within the Local Authority to offer advice and support?

**Education Safeguarding Officer - 01706 925384**

**Education Welfare Service - Tel: 01706 925115**

**Multi Agency Screening Service - Tel: 0300 303 0440**

**Out of Hours, Emergency Duty Social Work Team - Tel: 0300 303 8875**

**Local Authority Designated Officer (Allegations of Professional Abuse) -  
Tel: 01706 925365**

**Safeguarding Unit – 0300 303 0350**

External Agency

**Police Protection and Investigation Unit (PPIU) - Tel: 0161 856 4810 (CP)  
0161 856 8757 (DV)**

**The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline number – 0800 028 0285**

## **Early Help**

Early Help is about helping children, young people and families to deal with any issues as early as possible, before they turn into big problems.

It is about providing information, advice or services at the right time to meet a family's needs and to support them in resolving any concerns as soon as they emerge.

Every family is unique and everyone can go through problems that are difficult to deal with. Often it's useful for families to know exactly who can help them, such as a council service, a charity or a health provider. Key workers such as teachers or children's centre staff can agree an action plan with you to make sure you get the right support. They can do this by doing an Early Help Assessment which brings together different services to discuss any concerns in your family and help you solve them.

The [Family Service Directory](#) provides contact details and information about different services available and is a great way of finding local provision.

## **PREVENTIONS**

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, peer support and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help all children and especially those at risk of or suffering abuse.

The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensure children know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHCE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and/or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse;
- Include in the curriculum, material that will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regards to childcare and parenting skills.
- Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleague from other agencies.

## **PROCEDURES**

We will follow the procedures set out by the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board Child Protection Procedures.

Education staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage: referring those concerns to the appropriate organisation, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs and where appropriate to ongoing action to meet those needs. They will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the child's care of behaviour. (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006*).

Child Protection and Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice and the responsibilities of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Board (RBSCB) (*See Appendix 4 School Child Protection Procedures*).

If it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures located at [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org)

## **TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

St Andrew's CE Primary School and Nursery will ensure that the Head Teacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the nominated governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding attend training relevant to their role at regular intervals. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also attend Multi-Agency Child Protection/safeguarding training within this timescale. All staff receive basic training on September training days and regular updates at weekly briefing (see Appendix – Training on Child Protection) The schools green concerns form system encourages any child protection/safeguarding concerns are recorded and sent to Key Stage Leaders or immediately to DHT/HT if immediate action is required.

Also parents are informed of the school's duties and responsibilities under the Child Protection procedures in the home school agreement, a statement in the school prospectus and on the school website.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Child Protection.

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others, (including Children's Social Care staff and the police), must always have regard to both common and statute law.

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*). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, 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.

## **Children with SEND**

Abuse can happen to anyone but SEND children are over 3 times more likely to be abused or neglected than non-disabled children (Jones et al, 2012). It's vital that we monitor and follow best practice to keep them safe and protect them from abuse or neglect.

### **A Disclosure - General Advice**

- Try not look shocked/horrified
- Tell the child it is not their fault – the child often feels it is
- Explain that they did the right thing to tell
- Explain that you will have to tell someone in order to help them
- Reassure the child and talk to the designated teacher
- Always record and monitor anything of significance on a green concern form
- Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the document produced by RBSCB.

### **Duty to Refer**

The school will ensure that all adults in school should know:

- The name of the designated teachers and her/his role.
- That they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection/safeguarding concerns immediately to the designated teachers
- We will follow the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board (RBSCB)
- That members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may tell of abuse
- That parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding (Home/School Agreement, website etc.)
- Provide training for all staff so that they know;
  - Their personal responsibility
  - The relevant procedures,
  - The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
  - How to support a child who tells about abuse.
- Notify the Social Services team and/or the Education Welfare Service if:
  - It should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection plan either for a fixed term or permanently

- If there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection plan of more than a two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend)
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken) even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and are locked in the filing cabinet in the forest room.
- Adhere to the procedures set out in the Education Department Policy and Procedures document when an allegation is made against a member of staff (this process is managed by the head teacher or, if the allegation concerns the head teacher, a designated governor).
- Ensure the criminal background of applicants for vacant posts are checked in accordance with DfES circular 11/95 'Misconduct of Teachers and Workers with Children and Young People'.
- Designate a governor for safeguarding and child protection who will oversee the schools safeguarding and child protection policy and practice.

### **Supporting the pupils at risk**

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

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.

St Andrew's will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos, which promotes positive, calm, supportive and a secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The school's Behaviour, Rewards and Bullying Prevention Policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school (required under the Code of Practice, 1993 Education Act). All staff agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. We will

endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but he/she is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse that has occurred.

- 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.
- Liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, the Educational Psychology Services and the Education Welfare Service in line with appropriate Confidentiality parameters.
- Keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of concern
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever possible and so long as it is in the child's best interests to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in Safeguarding and Child Protection situations.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school.

These are:

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- School Security
- Staff Codes of Conduct – Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Setting
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-bullying
- SEND
- Health and Safety
- E-safety
- Handling Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
- Missing children

And [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) '**Working with Sexually Active Young People Under the Age of 18**'.

See DfE Statutory Guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2018

[www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) for Allegations Management Procedures.

When a pupil on the child protection register leaves St Andrew's, the relevant information will be transferred securely to the new school immediately and the relevant Social Services Team will be notified.

We recognise that, statistically, children with behaviour difficulties and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems, will be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be particularly vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

## **RECORDS AND MONITORING**

Well-kept records are essential to good Safeguarding and 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. There is also a need to share important education and any CP information at the point of a child's transition to another education establishment. (See RBC's Child Protection Information Sharing at Transition Protocol)

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. Also in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol misuse, children may also be particularly vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

## SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Education professionals who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of abuse should pass any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (**DSL**) in school; this should *always* occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs J Rainford and Mrs J Hodgson (DHT)**

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 DSL/line manager will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action<sup>4</sup>:

#### **Staff should never:**

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

#### **What should the DSL 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 and consider the Children's Needs and Response Framework?)
- Can the level of need identified be met:
  - In or by the school or by accessing universal services/without referral to the MASS or other targeted services?
  - By working with the child, parents and colleagues?
  - By completion of a CAF with parents/carers/child & other professionals
- What resources are available to me/the school and what are their limitations?
- Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to the Multi Agency Screening Service requesting that an assessment of need be undertaken? (**Section 17 Child in Need referral**)
- Is the level and/or likelihood of risk immediate and such that a Child Protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm? (**Section 47 Child Protection referral**))
- What information is available to me: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?
- What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be?
- Who do/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 professionals, recording, etc)

#### **Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Designated Safeguarding 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.

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<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on possible signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) in the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures.

## Thresholds for Referral to the Multi Agency Screening Service (MASS)

Where a Designated Safeguarding Lead or line manager considers that a referral to the MASS may be required, there are two thresholds for (and their criteria) and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

### Is this a Child In Need?

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

- S/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;
- His/her health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- S/he has a disability

### 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:

- is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- is in Police Protection; or where they have
- **there is 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 professional 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 using the Children's Needs and Response continuum and ensure that if the child has an open CAF that this information is attached as part of the referral to MASS.**

## Making Referrals to the MASS (Guidance for the Designated Safeguarding Lead)

### Child In Need/Section 17 Referrals

The DSL should look with other services as part of the Early Help Strategy to complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and copy this to:

[karen.donnelly@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:karen.donnelly@rochdale.gov.uk)

- 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 be identified on the CAF
- Where a parent/child/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).

## Child Protection

Use the multi-agency referral form (MARF) ([www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org)) for referrals to the Multi Agency Screening Service where it is considered that a child may be at risk of or suffering significant harm. If a TAF is in place then this information can form part of the CP referral but the school must complete the front sheet of the multi-agency referral form.

- 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), to another member in the family home or to a professional; or*
  - (b) *Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede a criminal 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.*

**See the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures on the RBSCB website for the occasions when parents/carers should not be informed.**

Fear of jeopardising a hard won relationship with parents because of a need to refer is **not** sufficient justification for not telling them that you need to refer. To the contrary, this 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 it is felt that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents then this should be mentioned when seeking advice and/or making this clear on the referral or in any telephone contact with the Multi Agency Screening Service.

## The MASS Responses to Referrals and Timescales

In response to a referral, the MASS may decide to:

- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
- Refer to Early help services
- Undertake an Assessment or request an assessment from a single agency;
- Convene a Strategy Meeting for referrals under Section 47 of the Children Act;
- Provide support services under Section 17;
- Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference;
- Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
- Make an application to court for an Order;

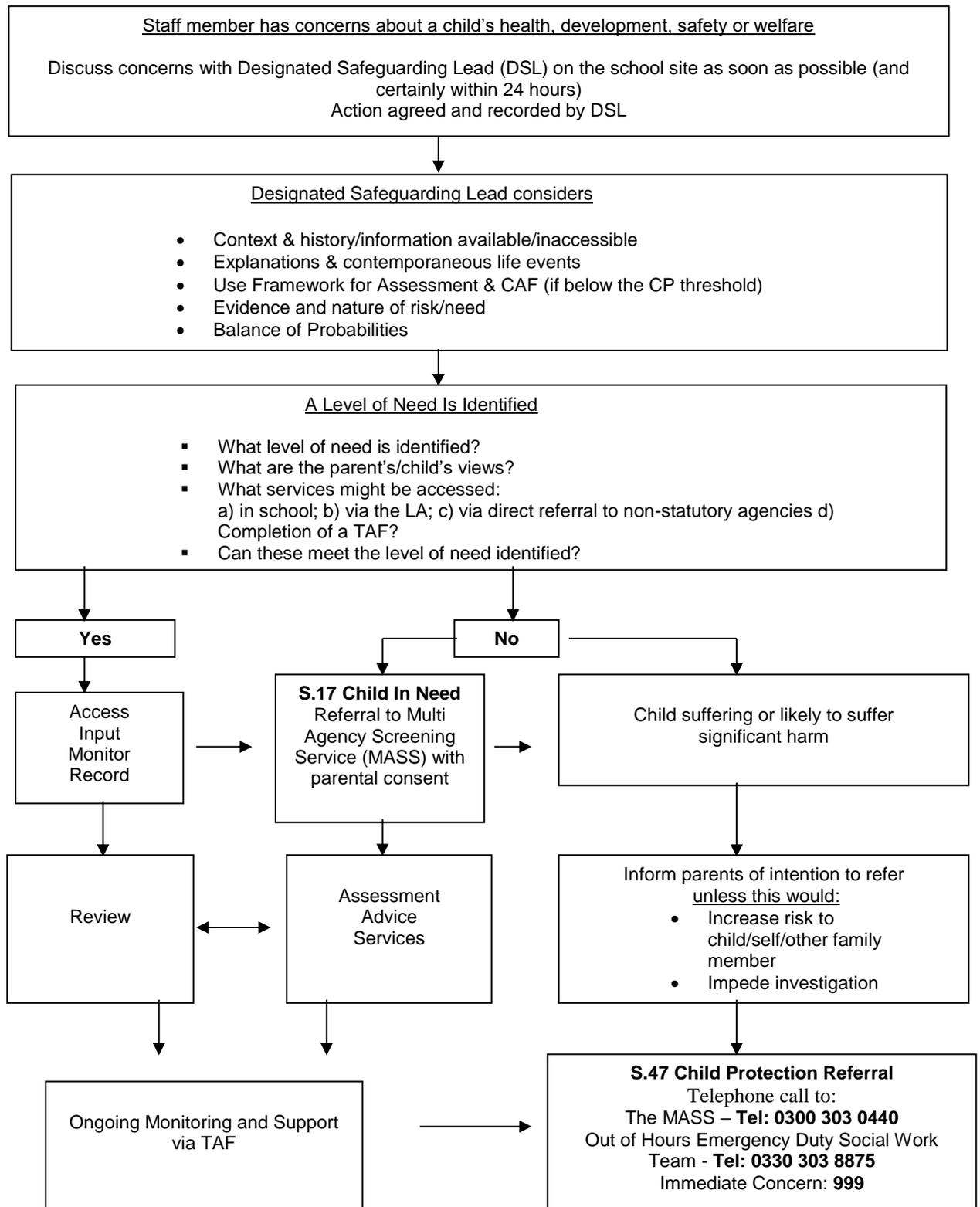
## Feedback from the MASS

The MASS has 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent Child Protection referral, and where this places school / a child(ren) in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to the relevant Team Manager at MASS (0300 303 0440) or the Education Safeguarding Officer (01706 925384)

## **Risk Assessment 'Checklist'**

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children 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?
- Parents'/carers' attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to co-operate?
- 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?
- Possibilities?
- Probabilities?
- 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 1:  
TAKING ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL**



**The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Rainford and Mrs Hodgson  
Telephone Number 01706 378991**

## **APPENDIX 2: TALKING AND LISTENING TO CHILDREN**

### **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 share the information;
- Make sure that the child is ok ;
- Make a careful record of what was said (see *Recording*).

### **You should *NEVER***

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

### **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).

### **Recordings should**

- State who was present, time, date and place (using full names and full job designations);
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the DSL 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 Children's Social Care will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and share information;
- 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 share immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head Teacher/line manager.

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

- **Never** asked 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;

Regular supervision at St Andrew's allows staff to think about what support **they** could access if faced with Child Protection/safeguarding issues in school.