



St Mary's Catholic College
Wallasey

Safeguarding and child protection policy

2025-2026

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Police	In an emergency For non-emergency but possible crime	999 101

Record of Safeguarding Training:

Type of Training:	Date completed:	Next due date:
Whole School Safeguarding Training (Due every three years)	09/2025	09/2028
Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Due every 2 years)	01/2024	01/2026
Deputy Senior DSL (Due every 2 years)	DDSL M Wilson 11/23 DDSL C Moor 12/24 DDSL M Todd 12/24 DDSL M Loon 10/24 DDSL N Lam 10/24	11/25 12/26 12/26 10/26 10/26
Whole School Staff Refresher/updates (Annual)	09/2024	09/2025
Safer Recruitment Training (Due every 5 years)	09/2022	09/2027
Governor Training	09/2025	09/2026
Annual DSL Prevent Training Update (for DSLs to disseminate to ALL staff)	09/2023	09/2025

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Child Protection - Safeguarding Policy:

INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1. It is essential that everybody working or visiting St Mary's Catholic College understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. St Mary's Catholic College is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance through our vision of ***work together;succeed together***. All staff should make sure that any decisions made are in the best interests of the child.
- 1.2. Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern. The governing body will ensure that the college will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and work together with external agencies to ensure that the college has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or where significant harm is suggested.
(<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/1-2-recognition-significant-harm/>)
- 1.3. St Mary's Catholic College is a community and all those directly connected, staff members, governors, parents, families and pupils, have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure for all.
- 1.4. This procedure document provides the basis for good practice within the college for all safeguarding work. It should be read in conjunction with the Wirral Safeguarding Partnership safeguarding Policies and Procedures (<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/>), plus the safeguarding appendices in this document. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the partnership considers to be safe and professional practice in this context.

2 OUR ETHOS:

- 2.1 St Mary's Catholic College is a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, spiritual and moral development of the individual child; enabling all children to thrive. The ethos is driven through developing our core values are respect, courage, pride, determination and compassion.
- 2.2 St Mary's Catholic College recognises the importance of providing an environment that will help children feel safe and respected. The College creates the conditions for children to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to. St Mary's recognises that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children

- 2.3 St Mary's Catholic College recognises that all adults within the college, including permanent, supply staff, temporary staff, volunteers, parents and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.
- 2.4 St Mary's Catholic College will work pro-actively with parents to build a solid understanding of the college's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1 In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years but in the case of SEN it is up to 25 years of age. The College will apply this policy to all pupils on roll.
- 3.2 This policy applies to all members of staff in St Mary's Catholic College , including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

4 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions (including sixth-form colleges) to make the necessary arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the college. Section 157 of the same Act places a similar duty on non-maintained and independent schools, including free schools and academies.
- 4.2 Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, all maintained schools, further education colleges and independent schools, including free schools and academies, are required to co-operate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.
- 4.3 Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the Local Safeguarding Children Board can require a school or further education institution to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.
- 4.4 This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, July 2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1080047/KCSIE_2022_revised.pdf

All procedures can be found on the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership website:
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/>

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) remained in force throughout the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). Guidance on keeping children safe in education continues to support the response to a pandemic if needed.

5.2 At St Mary's Catholic College the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall designated responsibility for safeguarding is John Wilson. Deputy designated safeguarding leads are Cath Moor, Margaret Todd, Joanna Jones & Michelle Wilson to ensure there is always appropriate cover for this role. **The responsibilities of all Designated Safeguarding Leads are described in detail in Appendix E.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be on St Mary's Catholic College's leadership team and their role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (and the deputy) will be **explicit in their job description**. This person should have the appropriate authority and be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and Safeguarding 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. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns. (KCSIE, 2022 para 103).

5.3 The college has a **nominated governor** Sheila Morrison who is responsible for safeguarding to champion good practice, to liaise with the headteacher and to provide information and reports to the governing body.

5.4 The **case manager for dealing with allegations** of abuse made against college staff members is the headteacher. The case manager for dealing with allegations against the headteacher is the chair of governors Charles Donnelly. **The procedure for managing allegations is detailed in Appendices.**

5.5 The **headteacher** and HFC MAT will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff and other

adults are clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child, including if children go missing from education. Including children who are 'absent' from education, or those unexplainable and/or persistent absences, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods.

- 5.6 The **governing body** is collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the college ethos and reflected in the day-to-day practice.
- 5.7 Through induction and staff training **all staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers** know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to pupils who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child. They are aware that behaviours and physical signs linked to behaviours that put children in danger. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This may include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual harassment, sexual violence and assaults, harmful sexual behaviour and sexting. Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/7-minute-briefing-Child-on-child-Abuse-July-2023.pdf>)
- 5.8 Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a college wide safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools, colleges and educational settings is here:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999239/SVSH_2021.pdf)

It should be recognised that these issues are likely to occur, and so St Mary's Catholic College has pastoral procedures in place to deal with issues when they arise. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, questioning their gender' + (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND. The College recognises that these children can be targeted by other children, so it is vital St Mary's Catholic College provides a safe space for these children to speak out and share their concerns with members of staff. Pupils are protected from upskirting, bullying (+ cyber), homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism, and all other forms of discrimination.

Staff have familiarity with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the Human Rights Act 1998 and recent reforms to the Act and how they apply to safeguarding
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights/outcome/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights-consultation-response>
More guidance in KCSIE2024.

St Mary's Catholic College acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. The College has a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents.

St Mary's Catholic College record incidents from across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours on CPOMS. This allows the college to understand the scale of the problem and make appropriate plans to reduce it. The appropriate safeguarding lead person should be familiar with the full guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

The College recognises that children may not feel ready to, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a '[professional curiosity](https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professional-curiosity/)' and speaking to the DSL. <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professional-curiosity/>

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in line with this child protection policies. Victims of harm should be supported by the college pastoral system, and their wishes and feelings considered and that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.

A bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance The NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Adult involvement in youth-produced sexual imagery

Sexually motivated incidents

The school will remain aware that not all instances of YPSI will be between children and young people, and in some cases may involve adults posing as a child for the purpose of obtaining nude and semi-nude images from persons under 18.

Staff will be aware of the signs that an adult is involved in the sharing of the nude or semi-nude images. These include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing unsolicited sexual images.

- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Being coerced or pressured into doing sexual things, including producing sexual imagery.
- Being offered money or gifts.
- Being threatened or blackmailed into sharing nude or semi-nude images, and/or further sexual activity.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated incidents of YPSI involving adults may also be called “sextortion”, where the offender threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they do something to prevent it, e.g. paying money. In these cases, offenders often pose as children and:

- Groom or coerce the victim into sending nudes or semi-nudes in order to blackmail them.
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person, e.g. via hacking.
- Use digitally manipulated and/or *AI-generated images of the child or young person.

*(Computer systems and software that are able to perform tasks that ordinarily require human intelligence, such as decision-making and the creation of images).

Staff will be aware of the signs of sextortion, which include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing sexual images first.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Told their online accounts have been hacked in order to obtain images, personal information, and contacts.
- Being blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details.
- Being shown stolen or digitally manipulated/generated images of the victim.

It is important that schools record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own schools and make appropriate plans to reduce it.

The guidance covers: It covers what sexual violence and harassment is, schools' and colleges' legal responsibilities, a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and child protection and how to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Children may not feel ready to, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a '[professional curiosity](https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professional-curiosity/)' and speaking to the DSL. <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professional-curiosity/>

Incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with your child protection and safeguarding policies. Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. A bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. If you are concerned about something, you can contact the NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

5.9 There is a Digital Safety policy, which covers the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g., i-Pads. For online safety, there is within the policy support about children accessing the internet whilst they're at St Mary's using data on their phones (3G or 4G networks). The policy reinforces the importance of online safety, including making parents aware of what St Mary's Catholic College asks children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online).

Digital literacy and safety is one of the most paramount issues of our time. For teachers and students, learning how to use the online space sensibly and in a protected manner is vital. Project EVOLVE by SWGfL presents a plethora of tools to help your staff and students, develop a well-rounded educational schemata for inclusion into lessons.

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/what-is-projectevolve-edu/>

The governing body and HFC MAT have developed systems through High-Impact to limit children's exposure to the risks from the the college's IT system and ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. The policy for remote learning that demonstrates an understanding of how to follow safeguarding procedures when planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely. St Mary's Catholic College maintains the capability to provide remote education when it is not possible for some or all of their pupils to attend in person. (All IT policies are located on the college website) Filtering and monitoring standards are adhered to and a DSL has robust oversight of the arrangements to meet those standards.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Artificial Intelligence has the power to transform education by helping teachers focus on what they do best: teaching. This marks a shift in how technology is used to enhance lives and tap into the vast potential of AI in classrooms. We look to consider the risks and challenges alongside the opportunities and benefits continue to work to ensure the safety and reliability of technology, including AI tools, to support teachers and learners. The guidance below support the assessment of risk:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education>

Resources for schools and education settings - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/using-ai-in-education-settings-support-materials>

6 SUPPORTING CHILDREN

- 6.1 St Mary's Catholic College recognises that children who are abused or witness violence (Domestic Abuse) are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. The college also recognises children who witness domestic abuse are victims, that witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on children, and that children can be victims in their own relationships too. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help> They may feel helpless, humiliated and some sense of blame. St Mary's Catholic College may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives.
- 6.2 The College accepts that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 6.3 **St Mary's Catholic College will support all pupils by:**
- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning; Through the Inspire curriculum and other curriculum contexts, pupils are encouraged to talk about feelings and deal assertively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn to for help and advice
 - providing pupils with a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties; and ensuring that pupils are taught about safeguarding so that they 'recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it

- Continuing to engage in Operation Encompass, the national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse, and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales. Children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse act.
- supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence and encourage the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying; (The anti-bullying policy is located on the college website)
- ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly; plus Relationship and Sexual Health Education (RSHE) requirements, Delivered through the Inspire programme.
- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children; including domestic abuse <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/domestic-abuse-act-statutory-guidance>
- ensuring that the curriculum will help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to and will support young people to become more resilient to inappropriate behaviours towards them, risk taking behaviours and behaviours that children may be coerced into including, sexual harassment, child-on-child abuse, 'sexting' and the displaying of 'Harmful Sexualised Behaviour' <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/resources/key-messages/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>
- Wirral's HSB identification toolkit can be found here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>

Child-on-child abuse (inc. sexual violence and sexual harassment)

- For the purposes of this policy, '**child-on-child abuse**' is defined as abuse between children.
- The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse,
- All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring.
- All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

- All staff will understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between peers, and will not tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
 - Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
 - Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
 - Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. / Upskirting.
 - Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.
-
- The DSL will ensure they appropriately assess all instances of child-on-child abuse, including in cases of image-based abuse, to help determine whether the alleged perpetrator(s) is under the age of 18 or is an adult posing as a child. The DSL will immediately refer the case if it is found that a so-called child-on-child abuse incident involves an adult, e.g. where an adult poses as a child online to groom a child or young person.
 - All staff will be clear as to the school’s policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
 - Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.
 - The school’s procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Child-on-child Abuse Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school’s Anti-bullying Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy, where relevant.
 - Addressing child on child abuse - [Resources for schools and colleges](#)
 - Responding to Child Sexual abuse – <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/child-sexual-abuse-response-pathway/>
 - considering intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
 - having a behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the college.

- ensure that each pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred; (The behaviour policy is located on the college website)
- the behaviour policy outlines measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Clear procedures are in place for addressing and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviours, sexual violence and sexual harassment - these procedures are easily understood and easily accessible. Children who have experienced sexual violence can display a wide range of responses, so the college will remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to their needs
- play a crucial role in preventative education and preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.
- ensure there is a culture of zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by the college behaviour policy, pastoral support system and a planned programme of RSHE delivered regularly, tackling issues such as: boundaries; consent; body confidence; stereotyping; and sexual harassment
- acknowledging the importance of 'Harm from outside the home' (HOTH), <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/> which considers wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare. ([Working together to safeguard children Dec 2023](#) and [KCSIE September 2024](#)).
- liaising with a range of Early Help agencies that support the pupil such as Health Services, Wirral Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services, Special Educational Support Services, Youth Services and the Educational Psychology Service.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing>
- ensuring that, when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection (**CP**) Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within two weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved
- alert the authority if it is aware of any child being looked after under a Private Fostering arrangement. On admission to college, and at other times, the college will be vigilant in identifying any private fostering arrangement

- acknowledging that a child that is looked after (CLA) or has been previously looked after by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CLA and previously looked after children safe. It is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group
- applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), by considering the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group
- recognising that to safeguard a pupil, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. By planning positive and proactive behaviour the college will reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint. Guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

6.4 Monitoring Attendance

- A child missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including exploitation. Local Authority guidance and procedures will be followed for dealing with a child who is missing from education, or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, particularly on repeated occasions or if a child suddenly stops attending. The school will follow the Missing Child Policy. For those children and families who have chronic poor attendance or persistent absenteeism, school will consider whether educational neglect is present and whether a referral to children's services is required, or whether the school should seek consent to begin an Early Help Assessment in order to coordinate a multi-agency plan of support for the child and family.
- Attendance will be closely monitored. In line with the school's attendance policy, contact will be made for any unexplained absences on the first morning of any absence. Follow up calls will then be made throughout the period of absence. In addition, the attendance of children with known welfare and attendance concerns will be monitored closely, particularly those with chronic poor attendance or persistent absentees, or if a child suddenly stops attending. Schools should also scrutinise the attendance of off-site provision to ensure children are attending and are safe. Similarly, the attendance of children who are vulnerable or with known welfare and safeguarding concerns such as children who have a child protection plan, a child in need, are Children Looked After and/or SEN will be rigorously monitored on a daily and weekly basis. The child's social worker will be informed immediately when there are unexplained absences or attendance concerns.
- It is important that the school's attendance team, including the Local Attendance Officer are aware of any safeguarding concerns. It is critical that when a child is not attending school their welfare is confirmed and expected practice would be for an appropriate professional to visit the home and speak to the child alone, particularly if there are any safeguarding concerns. The timing for this home visit will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The school will seek to ensure it has at least two

emergency contacts for each family and consider what urgent action it may need to take when a vulnerable child and family are not contactable and the child has not attended school. Where necessary, this may include reporting the child missing to the police. The school will ensure it is aware, in advance, of any difficulties in accessing the premises of a child's family home.

- It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.
- Children Missing Education (C.M.E.) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. All staff should be aware that children missing education, or those unexplainable and or/persistent absences, are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Children going missing, or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, can also be an indicator of mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. When a child is deemed to be missing from education, or those unexplainable and or/persistent absences, school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. Once these enquiries have been undertaken, our school will follow the local protocol for Children Missing Education and make a C.M.E referral to the Local Authority Officer for C.M.E.
- Some parents will decide to remove their child from the school role in order to educate them at home. For the majority of children, this choice will be with the child's best education at the heart of their decision and it will be a positive learning experience. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean that some children become less visible to services who are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their individual needs. Where a parent or carer has expressed their intention to remove their child from the school roll with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with other key professionals and will, where possible, attempt to facilitate a meeting with the family to ensure that all parties have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important for those children who have SEND, are vulnerable, and/or who have a social worker. The school will also link with the named officer for Elective Home Education within the Local Authority. Staff are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.

Alternative provision

- Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, (further information provided in [KCSIE 2024](#)).

- Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

7 SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

- 7.1 The College has developed a structured procedure in line with *Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership* which will be followed by all members of the St Mary's Catholic College community in cases of suspected abuse. **This is detailed in Appendices.**
- 7.2 In line with the procedures, the Integrated Front Door will be contacted as soon as there is a significant concern (0151 606 2008 / ifd@wirral.gov.uk)
- 7.3 The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be clearly advertised across the college **and on the website**, with a statement explaining the college's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- 7.4 The College will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by publishing the policy and procedures on our website and by referring to them in the college induction process..
- 7.5 The College will use the NSPCC- When to call the police to help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

8 DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE MADE BY A CHILD – ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF

- 8.1 ***If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should consider ways to:***

Receive - Listen actively, open body language, accept, non-judgmental. Use TED (tell, explain, describe)

Reassure - 'You've done the right thing by coming to me', re-assure child that you have listened and hear what they are saying; don't promise what can't be delivered

Respond - Tell what you are going to do and do it. Ensure child is ok before leaving

Report - As soon as possible, to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) in the school / setting

Record - Vital to stick to the facts, no opinions – Think about When? Where? Who? What?

Review – Take responsibility to follow up any referral (via your DSL)

In addition:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay and follow safeguarding process.
- Complete the Safeguarding incident/welfare concern form and pass it to the DSL.
- Complete a Cpoms Referral

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL. HFCMAT provide employee assistance should staff need to talk to another professional regarding a staff member's wellbeing.

Further information about what to do if you are worried that a child is being abused is available here in advice for practitioners:

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

The role of an appropriate Adult in Safeguarding:

The Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) act advises that "The role of the appropriate adult (AA) is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons", with there being further elaboration that the AA is expected to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained persons rights and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights.

The role of AA is not restricted to specific individuals, in relation to children and young people under the age of 18, PACE guidance sets out that the AA can be: the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.

<https://safeguarding.network/content/safeguarding-and-the-role-of-the-appropriate-adult/>

RECORD KEEPING

- 8.2 All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Systemic Practice model ([Introduction to Systemic Practice](#)) to be used to capture the child's voice and their daily lived experience.

- 8.3 The college will continue to support any pupils who leave the college about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including Safeguarding and welfare concerns, is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school as a matter of priority.
- 8.4 St Mary's Catholic College works towards holding at least two emergency contacts for every child on roll in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home in order to reduce the risk of not making contact with family members where welfare and/or safeguarding concerns are identified. ([Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#))

DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD – ADVICE FOR THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) AND DEPUTY DSLs

- 9.1 In general, you should always discuss any concerns the school may have with the child's parents. They need to know that you are worried about their child. However, you should not discuss your concerns if you believe that this would place the child at greater risk or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation.
- 9.2 If you make a decision not to discuss your concerns with the child's parents or carers, this must be recorded in the child's Safeguarding file with a full explanation for your decision and the reason for this decision.
- 9.3 It is important to record and consider the child's wishes and feelings, as part of planning what action to take in relation to concerns about their welfare. Capturing the lived experience of the child is paramount to ensure that actions remain child-centred (See Appendix document) Supporting Families Enhancing Futures – (SFEF) model to capture the child's lived experience **and their own words when possible**.
- 9.4 When talking to children, you should take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, which may not be English. It is also important to consider how a SEND child may need support in communicating.
- 9.5 How you talk to a child will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns. You may need to seek advice from the Integrated Front Door or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised.
- 9.6 If concerns have arisen as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.
- 9.7 It is expected that you discuss your concerns with the parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to the Integrated Front Door, unless you consider that this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- 9.8 You do not need the parents' consent to make a referral if you consider the child is in need of protection, although parents will ultimately be made aware of which organisation made the referral. If parents refuse to give consent to a referral but you decide to continue, you need to make this clear to the Integrated Front Door (IFD@wirral.gov.uk / 0151 606 2008).
- 9.9 If you decide to refer the child without the parents' consent, make sure to record this with a full explanation of your decision.
- 9.10 When you make your referral, you should agree with the Integrated Front Door what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when. The school as a relevant agency, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree to the levels for the different types of assessment as part of local arrangements.

MAKING A REFERRAL - If a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect please report it to the **Integrated Front Door**

Mon-Fri, 9:00am – 5.00pm Tel: 0151 606 2008

Outside of these hours Tel: 0151 677 6557

Email: IFD@wirral.gov.uk

In an emergency always call police on 999.
If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency call 101.

The new online Request for Services referral form can be accessed here:

https://wirral-self.achieveservice.com/service/Children_and_families_request_for_support_form

10 SAFER WORKFORCE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (This procedure is detailed in Appendix document)

- 10.1 St Mary's Catholic College will prevent people who pose risks to children from working in St Mary's Catholic College by ensuring that all individuals working in any capacity at St Mary's Catholic College have been subjected to safeguarding checks in line with [Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2024](#). In addition to obtaining the DBS certificate, anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.

A check of any prohibition can be carried out using the Teacher Services' system that may be found here:
<https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/>

Prohibition orders are described in the National College for Teaching and Leadership's (NCTL) publication Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers. It can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-the-prohibition-of-teachers--3>

- 10.2 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in St Mary's Catholic College. See Appendices document for information on Single Central Record (SCR). The single central record must cover the following people: all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party and supply staff who work at the college. The Single Central Record is located on a secure shared drive.
- 10.3 Every job description and person specification, and job advertisement will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder. The college website will echo this within the 'vacancies' section. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, Holy Family Multi Academy Trust will undertake general online searches for all shortlisted candidates, this may include social media and video platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok and YouTube. Online searches will only examine data that is publicly available, and the aim is to identify any incidents or issues. Any areas of concern will be discussed during the interview process.
- 10.4 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last 5 years.
- 10.5 St Mary's Catholic College has a procedure in place to manage allegations against members of staff, supply staff and volunteers (and to respond to low level concerns) in line with WSCP procedures here: [allegations against staff procedure](#). We will communicate with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), through consultations and referrals when needed
- 10.6 Supply teachers – St Mary's Catholic College will consider all allegations against an individual not directly employed by, where disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, (for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency) and ensure allegations are dealt with properly and communication with supply agency and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is continued throughout the investigation.
- 10.7 There is an agreed staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the code of conduct) which is compliant with 'Safer Working Practices', and includes - acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships, [low level concerns](#) and communications including the use of social media. The staff behaviour policy is located on the National College staff area.
- 10.8 For agency and third-party supply staff, the college will include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the

date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

Further Guidance can be accessed :

<https://c-cluster-110.uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/d71d6fd8-b99e-4327-b8fd-1ac968b768a4~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital>

11 STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1 All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given induction that includes basic safeguarding training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the safeguarding policy, staff code of conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges and other related policies. All governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. There are mechanisms in place, such as safeguarding updates, to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff should also read, "[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)." Dec 2023
- 11.2 The induction will be proportionate to staff members' and governors' roles and responsibilities
- 11.3 All Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will undergo updated DSL safeguarding training every two years. DSL's should undertake Prevent awareness training and disseminate the training to all staff annually via online National College training platform
- 11.4 All staff members of the college will undergo training (whole-school training) which is regularly updated and at least every three years. All governors must undergo governor specific awareness training to equip governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges, so they're assured safeguarding policies/procedures are effective and deliver a robust college wide approach to safeguarding. This training should be regularly updated. All staff will have access to WSCP multi-agency safeguarding training and e-learning. <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/training/>
- 11.5 Staff members who miss the I training will be required to undertake other relevant training to make up for it, e.g., by joining another school's whole-school training, booking onto whole-school training mop-up sessions. To book mop up sessions visit safeguarding partnership website: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/safeguarding-training-for-schools/>

- 11.6 The nominated governor for safeguarding will undergo training prior to or soon after appointment to the role; this training will be updated every three years. All governors will receive appropriate safeguarding training annually.
- 11.7 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in college-wide training if it takes place during their period of work at St Mary's.
- 11.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide briefings to staff on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) in line with [Working Together 2023](#). These will occur annually or more frequently when necessary. <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>
- 11.9 The college will maintain accurate and up to date records of staff induction and training.

12 CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

- 12.1 St Mary's Catholic College recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.
- 12.2 The headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only
- 12.3 All staff members must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep key information a secret or to themselves which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.
- 12.4 All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 12.5 All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- 12.6 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.
- 12.7 Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

- 12.8 Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety of children. ([KCSIE 2024](#))

School and college staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

13 INTER-AGENCY WORKING

- 13.1 St Mary's Catholic College will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care. In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support. More information on the early help process can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- 13.2 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings and forums, including child protection conferences and core groups to consider individual children
- 13.3 St Mary's Catholic College will participate in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's), other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership. St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that there is a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits and embed recommendations into practice and compile required actions within agreed timescales.

14 CONTRACTORS, SERVICE AND ACTIVITY PROVIDERS AND WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

- 14.1 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that contractors and providers are fully aware of the college safeguarding policy and procedures, all employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.
- 14.2 The college visitor policy and HR procedures will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, 2024*. If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use St Mary's Catholic College premises may be refused.
- 14.3 When services are commissioned from other organisations, compliance with the safeguarding policy will be a contractual requirement.

15 WHISTLE-BLOWING AND COMPLAINTS

- 15.1 St Mary's Catholic College recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so. The HFCMAT Whistle Blowing policy is located on the college website

Whistleblowing: guidance and code of practice for employers is located:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415175/bis-15-200-whistleblowing-guidance-for-employers-and-code-of-practice.pdf

Whistleblowing Advice Line is available for all worker - 0800 028 0285

- Email help@nspcc.org.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/blowing-the-whistle-to-the-department-for-education>

- 15.2 The college will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Safeguarding, which does include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the headteacher, the chair of the governing body or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 15.3 There is a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice. The college also acknowledges that low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g. suspicion, complaint or a disclosure. Concerns can be raised confidentially with any member of the senior leadership team, these will be investigated and escalated as necessary.
- 15.4 St Mary's Catholic College will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our Safeguarding arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

16 SITE SECURITY

- 16.1 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.
- 16.2 St Mary's Catholic College will check the identity of all visitors and volunteers. Visitors are expected to sign in and out in the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on the college site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
- 16.3 St Mary's Catholic College will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the college site.

17 QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 17.1 St Mary's Catholic College will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.
- 17.2 St Mary's Catholic College will complete an audit of the safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership and using the Section 175 online audit tool provided by them for this purpose. More information including how to register for the audit: <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/section-11-175-audit/>
- 17.3 The senior management and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.
- 17.4 The trust DSL will monitor and support DSL's in all schools across the HFCMAT with monitoring and QA.

18 POLICY REVIEW

- 18.1 This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle
- 18.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that staff members, including volunteers and sessional workers are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures
- 18.3 Additional updates to the safeguarding policy and appendix will take place when needed.

DSL Updated Policy Date:	DSL Scheduled review
September 2025	September 2026

Once the DSL has reviewed the policy it will be presented to governors.

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APPENDIX A:

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

1 MANAGING REFERRALS:

- 1.1 Refer all safeguarding cases, including Early Help, to the **Integrated Front Door (IFD)** and to the Police if a crime may have been committed. (IFD@wirral.gov.uk)
- 1.2 Identify any safeguarding issues relating to individual children, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- 1.3 Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of child protection and safeguarding, including Contextual Safeguarding.
- 1.4 Escalate inter-agency concerns and disagreements about a child's wellbeing. Further information can be found here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/10-2-multi-agency-escalation-procedure/>
- 1.5 Have responsibility to ensure there is at least one key adult for 'Operation Encompass*' and the point of contact for Child Exploitation. *Guiding principles of the scheme are here <https://www.operationencompass.org/school-participation>. An annual information letter to be sent to parents. All downloadable documents are here: <https://www.operationencompass.org/school-participation/school-downloads>. A generic safeguarding email address has been sent to Operation Encompass to ensure continuity. A key worker completes the online key adult training annually. Further information on Wirral Operation Encompass can be found in OE Information.
- 1.6 To ensure that the Local Authority are notified if children are persistently absent or missing from education. Including children who are 'absent' from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods. Or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'.

2 RECORD KEEPING:

- 2.1 Keep written (or online) records of Safeguarding and welfare concerns and ensure a stand-alone file is created as necessary for children with safeguarding concerns
- 2.2 St Mary's Catholic College will hold at least two emergency contacts for every child on roll in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home.
- 2.3 Maintain a chronology of significant incidents for each child with safeguarding concerns, including a record of decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.

2.4 Ensure such records are kept confidentially and securely and separate from the child's educational record.

2.5 When a child leaves St Mary's Catholic College, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school and will ensure that the safeguarding file is forwarded to the receiving school within two weeks. St Mary's Catholic College will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving school and/or evidence of recorded delivery. Where a parent elects to remove their child from the St Mary's roll to home educate, the college will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding records to the Education Social Welfare Service.

3 INTER-AGENCY WORKING AND INFORMATION SHARING:

3.1 Co-operate and comply with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

3.2 Advocate that the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe; and this includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent ([Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)).

3.3 Complete reports and attend, or ensure other relevant staff members attend, child protection conferences, core group meetings and other multi-agency meetings, as required.

3.4 Liaise with other agencies working with the child, share information as appropriate and contribute to assessments.

3.5 The Trust's information sharing policy is located on the college website and refers to confidentiality in line with 'Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services' (DfE, 2018).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

4 TRAINING:

4.1 Undertake appropriate annual training, **(updated every two years for DSL's)**, in order to

- be able to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to them, including special circumstances such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, fabricated or induced illness
- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, e.g. WSCP thresholds of need, preventative education and the local offer
- have a working knowledge of how the local authority conducts initial and review child protection (CP) case conferences and contribute effectively to these; and
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need (as specified in section 17 of the Children Act 1989), those with special educational needs, pregnant teenagers, young carers, those who are privately fostered, vulnerable to exploitation, racialisation and subject to listening or hearing to domestic abuse.

4.2

Ensure each member of staff has read and understands the College's Child Protection - Safeguarding policy and procedures, including providing induction on these matters to new staff members. Induction and training must include the college behaviour policy and procedures for managing children who are missing education, or unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education', as well as the staff code of conduct, and the child protection policy, dealing with disclosures and managing allegations processes.

4.3

Organise face-to-face college wide Safeguarding training for all staff members at least **every three years**. Ensure staff members who miss the training receives it by other means, e.g. by joining another school's training. The DSL must provide all staff members with safeguarding updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Link to access safeguarding training via Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) is: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/safeguarding-training-for-schools/>

4.4

All staff should be aware of systems within their the college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- child protection - safeguarding policy
- behaviour policy
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct)
- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Best practice would also see staff and leaders reading - '[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)', as it contains examples of the different types of safeguarding issues.

- 4.5 Ensure the college allocates time and resources every year for relevant staff members to attend training and receive continuous professional development opportunities.
- 4.6 Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any action taken to protect them.
- 4.7 Maintain accurate records of staff recruitment, induction, ongoing training and continual professional development (CPD) relating to safeguarding. WSCP School / College / Educational establishment training courses can be found here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/schools/>

5 AWARENESS RAISING:

- 5.1 Ensure the college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately.
- 5.2 Ensure the college's child protection - safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
- 5.3 Ensure the child protection - safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the college in this; and
- 5.4 Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements. www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk

6 QUALITY ASSURANCE:

- 6.1 Monitor the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures,

including periodic audits of Safeguarding and welfare concerns files (at a minimum once a year).

- 6.2 Complete an audit of the safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership. Schools complete the 175 audit page here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/section-11-175-audit/>
- 6.3 Provide regular reports, to the governing body detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and the number of children with child protection plans and other relevant data.
- 6.4 Take lead responsibility for remedying any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding arrangements.

7 SUPERVISION AND REFLECTION:

- 7.1 Working to ensure children and young people are protected from harm

requires a sound professionals judgements to be made. It is demanding work that can be distressing and stressful. It is therefore essential that staff involved in this work have access to advice and a robust process of reflection/ supervision to help them reflect upon and review their work.
- 7.2 St Mary's Catholic College will have a framework for providing an opportunity

to staff who are working directly with vulnerable young people, particularly those who are being managed on a child protection, child in need or team around the family plan, to have regular access to an appropriate manager to talk through and reflect on their involvement with the child's case. A guidance document published by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership for undertaking safeguarding reflection is published on the WSCP website and can be accessed here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/>

APPENDIX B: Safeguarding Procedure

1 DEFINITIONS:

1.1 **Abuse:** : a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

1.2 **Children** are any people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday; a 16-year-old, whether living independently, in further education, in the armed forces or in hospital, is a child and is entitled to the same protection and services as anyone younger. KCSIE now applies to providers of post 16 education as set out Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021

1.3 **Child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and refers to activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, or significant harm is suggested.

1.4 **Early help** means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life.

1.5 **Harm** is ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

1.6 **Safeguarding children** is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating (KCSIE 2024)

All staff must be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults, harassment and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse; and on how the risk of child-on-child abuse is being

minimised, how suspected abuse will be recorded and investigated; as well as how the victims and perpetrators will be supported. More support can be found:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-youth-people>

It is important to record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that college management can understand the scale of any problem that exists and make appropriate plans to reduce it. For more guidance go to: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges)

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with your setting's child protection policies. Victims of harm should be supported by the college pastoral system.

A bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. If you are concerned about something, you can contact the NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

1.7 **Significant harm** is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in the family in the best interests of the child. Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 states 'where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.'

1.8 Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care, education or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse; <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/domestic-abuse-act-statutory-guidance>
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child.

2 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE:

2.1 **Emotional abuse** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

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

2.2 **Neglect** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

Educational neglect is also considered: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/neglect/>

Neglect is the most common reason for a child to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan in the UK and research from the NSPCC tells us that 1 in 7 secondary school age children and 1 in 20 children under 11 in the UK have been neglected at some point. To help combat neglect of children the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership has developed and published its multi-agency Neglect Strategy (June 2023): [Cherish - Wirral's Neglect](#) Strategy

2.3 **Physical abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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.

2.4 **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. ([KCSIE 2024](#)).

3. Mental Health:

- 1.1 All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
- 1.2 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one
- 1.3 Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education
- 1.4 If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing>

The department has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (which may also be useful for colleges). In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol. See Every Mind Matters for links to all materials and lesson plans.

There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

Is this a child with additional needs; where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected?

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the Early Help Assessment (EHAT) trained practitioner in St Mary's Catholic College, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for an EHAT to be completed.

Is this a child in need matter? Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- they are 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.
- their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- they are SEND (and as such can face additional safeguarding challenges).

If this is a child in need, discuss the issues with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and parents. Obtain their consent for referral.

Is this a child protection matter? Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm.
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- serious health problems.

More on the thresholds can be found here:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/multi-agency-thresholds/>

If this is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will need to be referred to the Integrated Front Door by the college safeguarding team as soon as possible.

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/public/concerned-about-a-child/>

APPENDIX C: FURTHER INFORMATION

A full series of '7-minute briefings' have been designed to inform and engage staff in understanding a wide range of safeguarding concerns. A selection can be found at the end of this document. There are new briefings being added, so to access the full range of briefings click here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/7-minute-briefings/>

1 Female Genital Mutilation - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/harmful-practices/>

1.1 Indicators - There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (pp42-44) focuses on the role of schools and colleges. Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) gives the Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons. Once the government issues any statutory multi-agency guidance this will apply to schools and colleges.

1.2 Actions - If staff have a concern they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Mandatory reporting commenced in October 2015. These procedures remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

1.3 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, 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.

The Mandatory reporting duty commenced in October 2015. Teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the designated safeguarding lead and involve the Integrated Front Door as appropriate.

2 Fabricated or Induced Illness / Perplexing Presentation:

2.1 Staff must be aware of the risk of children being abused through fabricated or induced illness (FII). There are three main ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents;
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

2.2 Where this is identified and considered a risk a referral will be made to **The Integrated Front Door (IFD)** for support and guidance. The college may involve other agencies in making their assessments. That could include school nurse, community paediatricians, occupational therapists for example. For more on Perplexing presentations go to <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/7-Minute-Briefing-Perplexing-Presentations-and-FII.pdf>

3 Gang and Youth / Serious Violence:

3.1 Children and Young People who become involved in Gangs are at risk of violent crime and as a result of this involvement are deemed vulnerable. Agencies and professionals have a responsibility to safeguard these children and young people and to prevent further harm both to the young person and their potential victims. Risks associated with Gang activity include access to weapons (including firearms), retaliatory violence and territorial violence with other gangs, knife crime, sexual violence and substance misuse

3.2 Indicators may be (age in brackets):

- Troublesome (7-9; 10-12) / High daring (10-12) / Positive attitude towards delinquency (10-12) / Previously committed offences (7-9) / Involved in anti-social behaviour (10-12)
- Substance use (7-9) / Aggression (7-9) / Running away and truancy (7-9; 10-12) / Marijuana use (10- 12) / Marijuana availability (10-12) / Disrupted family (7- 9; 10-12) / Poor supervision (10-12)
- Low academic achievement in primary school (10- 12) / Learning disability (10-12) / Peers involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (7-9; 10-12)
- Children and young people in the neighbourhood involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (10-12)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

3.3 Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- **go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;**
- **have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);**

4 Faith Based Abuse:

4.1 Our policy recognises the 'National Action Plan to Tackle Abuse linked to faith or belief' which describes this abuse as:

'not about challenging people's beliefs, but where beliefs lead to abuse that must not be tolerated. This includes belief in witchcraft, spirit possession, demons or the devil, the evil eye or djinns, dakini, kindoki, ritual or muti murders and use of fear of the supernatural to make children comply with being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. The beliefs which are not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community.'

4.2 When this type of abuse is suspected, staff will make a referral to Wirral Integrated Front Door (IFD – 0151 606 2008) for support and guidance. The college may request the advice and support of MEAS service in making their assessments.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

5 Risk to Trafficking:

5.1 Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress And Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women And Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime to the UN Convention (2000) (ratified by the UK on 6 February 2006) defines trafficking as:

- (a) "Trafficking of persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat of or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.
- (b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in sub-paragraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.

- (c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in sub-paragraph (a) of this article
- (d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

5.2 Children trafficked into the country may be registered at a school for a term or longer, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad. This pattern of registration and de-registration may be an indicator that a child has been trafficked. It has been identified as a particular concern in schools which are situated near ports of entry, but practitioners should be alert to this possibility in all schools. However, practitioners should always bear in mind that not all children who go missing from education have been victims of trafficking. For example, there may be instances of children from communities that move around – Gypsy, Roma, traveller or migrant families – who collectively go missing from school.

5.3 If a member of staff suspects that a child may have been trafficked they should act immediately to inform the senior member of staff with designated responsibility for child protection and ensure that police or local authority children’s social care are contacted immediately.

6 Risks Associated with Parent/Carer Mental Health:

6.1 The majority of Parents who suffer mental ill-health are able to care for and safeguard their children and/or unborn child. Some parents, however, will be unable to meet the needs and ensure the safety of their children. The college will follow the guidance outlined in ‘working with parents with mental health problems and their children (Think child, think parent, think family: a guide to parental mental health and child welfare).

6.2 Our approach is to recognise; seek support; instil preventive factors and monitor. The Integrated Front Door can provide links and support with Wirral Adult Social Care if required. Designated teachers should seek support through TAF with family support but escalate to the Integrated Front Door if they are concerned that the child involved is being placed at immediate risk of harm. The **CAMHS and Early Help Resource-and-Information-Pack** details the Early Help services available to children, young people and their families. The offer includes mental health support services:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/what-is-early-help/>

7 Drugs and Alcohol: Children can be at risk of drugs and alcohol directly and indirectly. They may be at direct risk of having access to these substances (see guidance on gangs) or indirectly because they affect family life at home through use by parents/carers, siblings, child-minders etc. Risks associated with drugs and alcohol and built into the year 5-6 curriculum. St Mary’s Catholic College works with our partners and Wirral LA to provide curriculum advice and guidance in this area. To access the most up to date Wirral School Drugs Policy click - <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/school-drug-policy/>

More details can be found at: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/substance-misuse/>

8 Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages:

8.1 Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage refers to a collection of practices used to control behaviour within families to protect perceived cultural or religious beliefs and honour. Violence can occur when offenders perceive that a relative has shamed the family or community by breaking their 'code of honour'. Honour Based Violence cuts across all cultures and communities: Turkish, Kurdish, Afghani, South Asian, African, Middle Eastern, South and Eastern European for example. This is not an exhaustive list. Where a culture is heavily male dominated, HBV may exist.

8.2 'A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.' The age to marry has been raised to the age of 18. (Feb 2023) It is now a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. (KCSIE 2024)

For more information see;

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/>

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

<http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

9 Managing Allegations against staff:

9.1 The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (**LADO**) **must be told of allegations against adults working with children and young people within 24 hours.** Chairs of Governors should refer to this guidance if there is an allegation against the headteacher. This includes all cases that meet the harms threshold where a person is alleged to have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of the college, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. Where appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works should be undertaken. If in doubt seek advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO).

9.2 There are two levels of allegation/concern:

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold (see definition above)
2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to in the guidance as ‘low level concerns’ (KCSIE 2024)

Governing bodies and proprietors should have policies and processes to deal with concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold. Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

It is important that schools and colleges have appropriate policies and processes in place to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children.

‘Low Level Concerns’ - Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the college may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- 'humiliating pupils'

Such concerns such always be recorded and reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified

9.3 The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) in Wirral is **Pamela Cope / Education LADO is Angela Reeve**

❏ **email all referrals and/or consultation forms to:** kerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk and safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk

If judged appropriate during the initial contact with the LADO, an Allegations Referral Form must be completed by the senior manager in full and forwarded to the LADO via email within 24 hours. LADO referral form, flowcharts and information can be accessed here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/lado-allegations>

The LADO procedure does not replace safeguarding procedures and the **Integrated Front Door** (IFD@wirral.gov.uk) must be contacted if you have a safeguarding concern about a child. If you require advice about your agency's response to an allegation, please contact your HR provider.

The LADO can only provide advice and guidance regarding allegations in relation to a person in a position of trust. Any general safeguarding enquiries or concerns should be reported to Wirral Integrated Front Door on 0151 606 2008 or 0151 677 6557 out of hours.

10 Preventing Radicalisation:

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of colleges' wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent susceptible people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme

10.1 Prevent - From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ('The CTSA 2015') Schools must have regard to statutory PREVENT GUIDANCE issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools' responsibility to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism."

This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies.

The statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools in terms of four general themes:

- risk assessment
- working in partnership
- staff training

- IT policies

Schools are expected to **assess the risk** of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools and colleges should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. **It is not necessary for schools and colleges to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.** The Prevent duty builds on **existing local partnership arrangements**. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs).

The Single Point of Contact for Sefton, Wirral & St Helens is Claire Wright, claire.wright@liverpool.gov.uk. All assessments are to be carried out via Integrated Front Door. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales.

The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent **awareness training** to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. *As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.*

Schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when **accessing the internet** in schools. St Mary's will ensure that suitable filtering is in place. The inspire programme teaches pupils about online safety more generally. Further information and guidance is available on the WSCP website: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/radicalisation-and-extremism/>

The Department for Education has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty and is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

10.2 Channel

College staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel team. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and, where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education and, as partners, are required to cooperate with local Channel panels. Channel guidance can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance>

11 Child Missing Education: All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area, or those ‘unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education’.

11.1 A child being absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. College staff should follow the procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, or those ‘unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education’ particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

11.2 Schools should put in place appropriate Child Protection - Safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly children who are ‘absent’ from education, or those ‘unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education’ on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. An appropriated response is needed when a child has poor attendance or is regularly missing education, or those ‘unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education’
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

11.3 All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by an appropriate medical practitioner as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;

- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

11.4 The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. **Schools should contact the Admissions section: Tel: 0151 666 4600.** This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education' follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

12 Child Sexual Exploitation & Child Exploitation (CE):

12.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) - CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation

The department provide: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

A full list of indicators can be found here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/child-exploitation/>

12.2 Child Criminal Exploitation: While there is still no legal definition of 'Child Criminal Exploitation' or CCE, it is increasingly being recognised as a major factor behind crime in communities across Merseyside and the UK, while also simultaneously victimising vulnerable young people and leaving them at risk of harm. A simple definition of CCE is: CCE often occurs without the victim being aware that they are being exploited and involves young people being encouraged, cajoled or threatened to carry out crime for the benefit of others. In return they are offered friendship or peer acceptance, but also cigarettes, drugs (especially cannabis), alcohol or even food and accommodation.

12.3 County lines is a term used to describe gangs, groups or drug networks that supply drugs from urban to suburban areas across the country, including market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or 'deal lines'. They exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money to and from the urban area, and to store the drugs in local markets. They will often use intimidation, violence and weapons, including knives, corrosives and firearms. County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities. Further information and PAN Merseyside CE / CCE Documentation can be found here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/child-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/>

12.4 Child Sexual Exploitation & Child Criminal Exploitation: Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and children or adults.

The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation. As well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Further information and documentation can be found here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/child-exploitation/>

13 Sexual harassment, violence, harmful sexual behaviours (inc. child on child abuse and 'upskirting')

13.1 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

13.2 It is important that schools and colleges are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. Sexual harassment is any form of 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college. When sexual harassment is referenced, it is done so in the context of child on child, sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

13.3 Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools and colleges can be found in KCSIE 2024. The Wirral Youth Justice Service have developed a multi-agency HSB identification tool to help professionals determine and assess the level of sexual behaviours being displayed by a child.

The tool, and included guidance sets out, for different age ranges, what are expected and normal behaviours, what are inappropriate or concerning, and what are likely to be harmful. For each level of behaviour the tool provides clear advice about how to respond. [Toolkit](#)

It should be recognised that these issues are likely to occur, and so schools should have procedures in place to deal with them. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender+ (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND. It is by the college recognise that these children can be targeted by other children, so it is vital St Mary's Catholic College provide a safe space for these children to speak out and share their concerns with members of staff. Pupils are protected from 'upskirting', bullying, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination. Staff have familiarity with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), the Human Rights Act 1998 and recent reforms to the Act and how they apply to safeguarding.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights/outcome/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights-consultation-response>

The Wirral Domestic Abuse Alliance and the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership have published the [Wirral Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls strategy](#).

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) refers to a range of crimes, with the common theme that they disproportionately affect women and girls. This strategy has been developed to help professionals identify, prevent and respond to all gender-based violence.

The strategy includes a comprehensive local delivery plan, and with its emphasis on prevention and education involves closer work with schools and colleges. This can be viewed here: [VWAG Strategy](#).

13.4 St Mary's Catholic College acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. St Mary's Catholic

College also has a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents. The college will record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own and make appropriate plans to reduce it. For more guidance go to: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671112/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges.pdf)

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with your setting's child protection policies. Victims of harm will be supported by the college's pastoral system and, and their wishes and feelings considered and that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.

13.5 The appropriate safeguarding lead person should be familiar with the full guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

Upskirting - 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019.

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales](https://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/consent) -

Sexual consent

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;

14 Digital Safety, Remote Learning & Filtering and Monitoring:

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation- technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers the

college to protect and educate the whole college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- ☐ content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- ☐ contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- ☐ conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

There is an E Safety policy, which covers the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g., i-Pads. For online safety, there is within the policy support about children accessing the internet whilst they're at the college using data on their phones (3G or 4G networks). The policy reinforces the importance of online safety, including making parents aware of what St Mary's Catholic College ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)

Governing bodies and proprietors are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the college IT system and ensure the college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

For online safety, there is recognition in this guidance that most children are using data on their phones, on the 3G or the 4G network. In schools, this means that not only must staff think about filtering and monitoring within the Trust IT infrastructure, but they also need to have a policy about children accessing the internet whilst they're at the college.

14.1 Filters and monitoring

Governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure the college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks. Additional support documents can be found here: [digital safety](#).

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: [UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring](#). There is guidance below designed to help parents and carers to keep their children as safe as possible when online:

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/online-safety-guidance-parents/>

All staff are to understand their role in the published standards for 'Filtering and Monitoring' and DSLs are expected to have the 'lead responsibility'. The standards can be found here:

<http://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Further support on digital safety, filtering and monitoring can be found here:

Filtering and Monitoring has been added to the full staff CPD programme and governing body/trustees will be supported to understand their role in Filtering and Monitoring. DSL's will have 'lead responsibility' for Filtering and Monitoring and this forms part of their job description.

14.2 The policy for remote learning that demonstrates an understanding of how to follow safeguarding procedures when planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely. The college maintains the capability to provide remote education when it is not possible for some or all of their pupils to attend in person. (All IT policies are located on the college website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools>

15 Pre-Appointment Checks and Safer Recruitment:

15.1 Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, must be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

15.2 When appointing new staff, St Mary's Catholic College and HFC MAT will; Verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website;

- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity);
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- St Mary's Catholic College recognises that the 'relationships and associations' that staff have at work and outside (including online), may have an implication for the safeguarding of children at St Mary's. Where this is the case, the member of staff must speak to the DSL (Childcare Act 2006 – as amended).
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, follow advice on the GOV.UK website;

- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the college considers appropriate and verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
 - carry out prohibition check for all staff with QTS
 - complete a risk assessment for each volunteer to decide whether they need to do an enhanced DBS check or not. (Please note:, even if it is decided an enhanced DBS is to be requested, if the volunteer is not in regulated activity, then you're not legally allowed to do a barred list check).
 - carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence (and informing them of this prior to searches) to help identify any issues that are publicly available online
- The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 extended safeguarding provisions to providers of post 16 Education: 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers.

15.2 The college safer recruitment policy should focus on ensuring potential applicants are given the right messages about the school and college's commitment to recruit suitable people. ***Further safer recruitment guidance can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)***

15 Single Central Record:

15.3 Schools and colleges must keep a single central record. The single central record must cover the following people:

- all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the college, this means those providing education to children; and
- The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried route) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:
- an identity check / a barred list check / an enhanced DBS check/certificate / a prohibition from teaching check;
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK; this would include recording checks for those EEA teacher sanctions and restrictions
- a check of professional qualifications; and a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

15.4 For supply staff, The College will include whether written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of supply staff, and the date that confirmation was received.

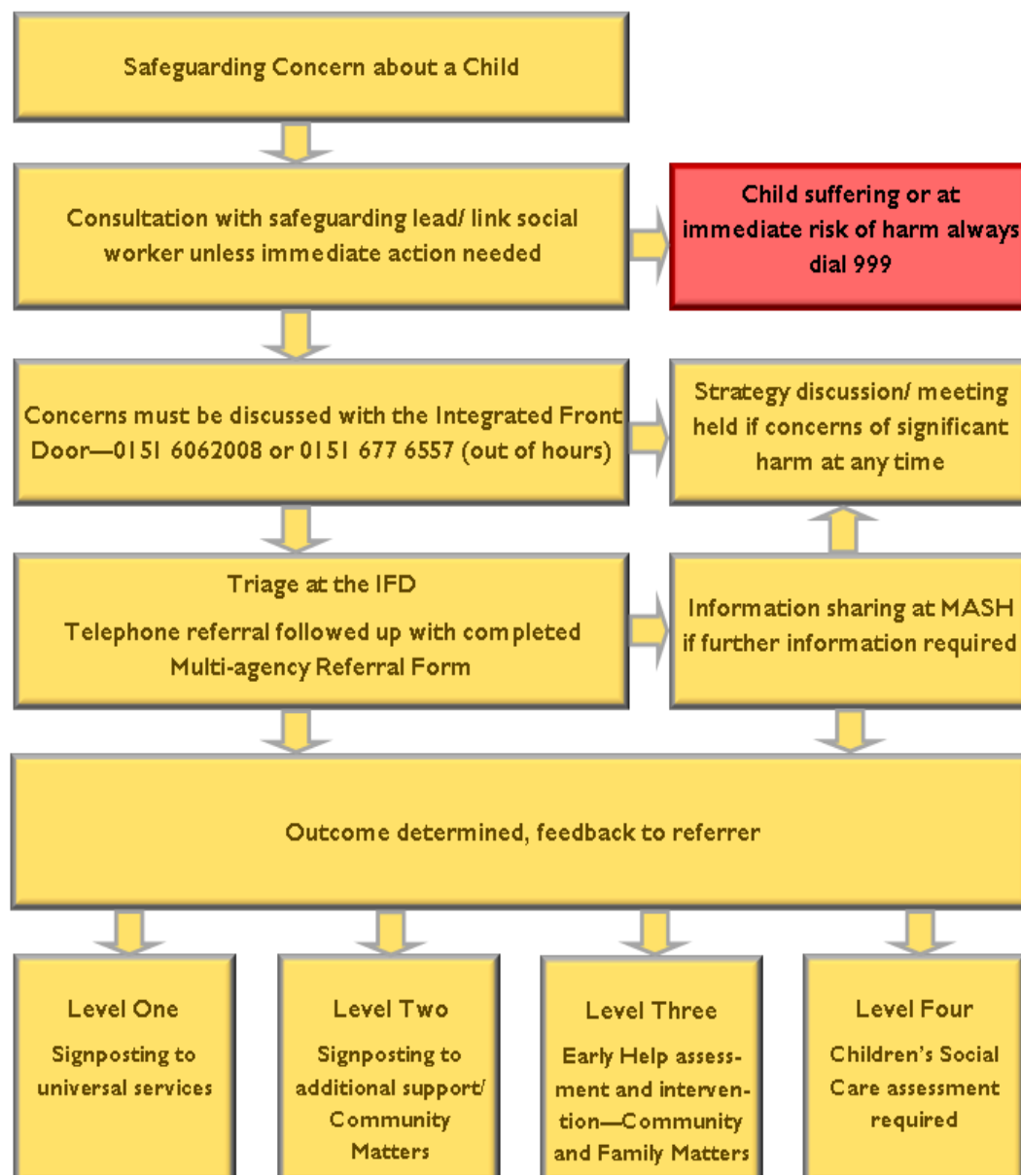
15.5 Staff leavers - The details of an individual should be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at the school or college.

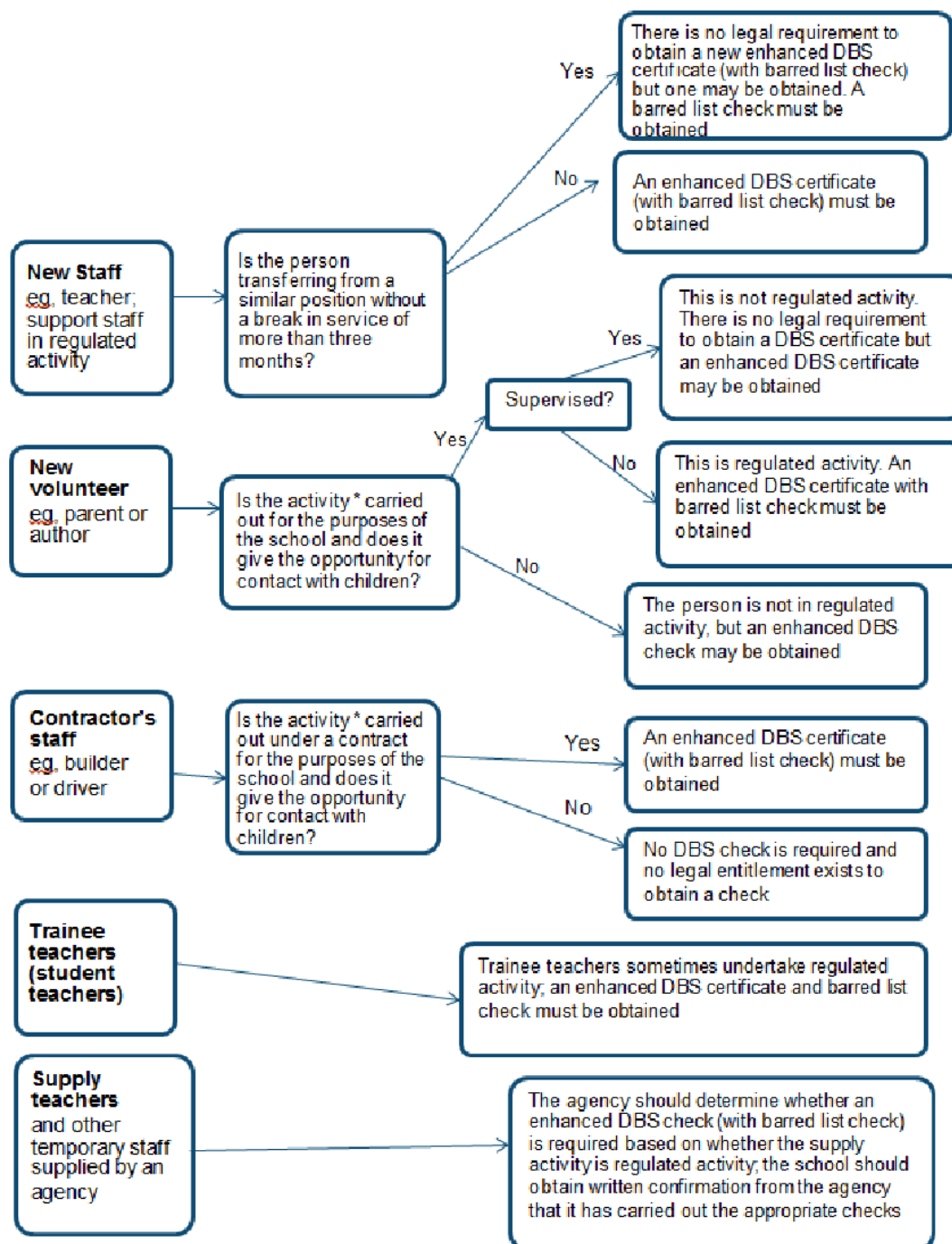
15.6 Maintained school governors - Governors in maintained schools are required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS. It is the responsibility of the governing body to apply for the certificate for any of their governors who does not already have one. Governance is not a regulated activity and so they do not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

15.7 The SCR shall be updated in the light of any further legislation.

15.8 Where school premises are used for non-school activities, those providers are expected to meet the guidelines in Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings.

Actions to take when there are safeguarding concerns about a child





* Activities listed under the guidance's definition of regulated activity and which are carried out 'frequently'

ALLEGATIONS FLOWCHART



Early Help - On a Page

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/what-is-early-help/>

Early Help & Prevention Offer	All People	Some People	Specific People	
	Global Prevention	Focused Prevention	Targeted Early Support	Reactive Intervention
What are we aiming to do?	Provide education and encouragement to empower children, young people and families	Prevent anticipated need arising by supporting children, young people and families	Meet needs and reduce the likelihood of referral to Children's Services	Deliver focused activity to reduce the need for Children's Social Care intervention
Who?	All children and young people	Children and young people belonging to a vulnerable group	Children and young people at level 2 on the continuum of need	Children and young people at level 3 on the continuum of need
How will we know about them?	Universal coverage with opportunity for self-identification/selection	Identification through universal access, data analysis and insight	Professional identification and referral to Community Matters	Professional identification and referral to Family Matters and/or Children's Services
What will we do	Partnership approach to providing a wide range of activities, information, advice and guidance	Partnership approach to providing a wide range of preventative activity, signposting and guidance	Partnership Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan	LA Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan
Who will do this?	Partnership offer: published on WSCB website, the Hive Youth Zone, Healthy Child Programme, 3 and 4 year old funding for early education LA Services: Children's Centre Universal Offer, Play Services Youth Hubs and Hubs, Health Services in Schools	Partnership offer: published on WSCB website, 2 year old funding for early education LA Services: Early Years Family Workers, Children's Centre Groups, Health Services in Schools 1:1s and Parent Education, Creative Youth Development, Alcohol and Substance Education	Community Matters services: WEB, WIRED, Safer Wirral Hub, Caritas, Fender Community Hub, The Open Door Centre LA Services: Early Years Portage Team, Detached Youth Work, Youth Projects- GIRLS, LADS, Life Skills	Family Matters services: Targeted Family Support, Pre-Birth & Infant Team, Adolescent Response Team, Family Group Conferencing LA Services: Alcohol & Substance Misuse Work, Counselling,
How? Methods/ model?	Range of activities provided through the Children's Centre What's On guides, guided play sessions; open access to youth hubs and clubs with a range of activities, advice and guidance, drop in sessions for all secondary school pupils	Range of parenting programmes, 1:1 support, peer support, parent education sessions, theatre and arts activity, briefings, multi-agency workshops, partnership with schools	Partnership Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan underpinned by SFEF Community Matters services: parenting, mental health support, advocacy, family support, debt advice, health & wellbeing, whole-family approach	Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan underpinned by SFEF Family Matters services: parenting, reducing conflict, family mediation, 1:1 support; 1:1 nurture programme, 1:1 gateway programme, housing advice, whole-family support plan, co-ordination of multi-agency approach
How will we know the impact?	Data on engagement: registrations, reach, contact, sustained contact, evaluations from children, young people and families	Increase in early help activity, reduction in contacts to Children's Social Care, evaluations from children, young people and families	Reduction in contacts to Children's Social Care, cases closing with needs met, family evaluations	Reduction in referrals to Children's Social Care, progress of step downs, cases closing with needs met, family evaluations

Children, young people and families are at the heart of our services - We will ensure that we engage with children, young people and families to improve and co-produce future service provision.

7 Minute Briefings

1. What is it?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (Fully described in the DfE guidance and in KCSIE). This briefing will focus on peer sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated / create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It is important that schools are aware and that children can, & sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way.

2. What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can include: sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names / sexual "jokes" or taunting / physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature / online sexual harassment / non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include: sexualised online bullying / unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media / sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and 'Upskirting'.

3. Why is it important?

The Department for Education (DfE) first published guidance on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges, in 2017 (updated May 2018) which means that schools and colleges in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The advice covers children of all ages, from the primary through secondary stage and into colleges. Whilst the focus of the advice is on protecting and supporting children, schools and colleges should of course protect any adult students and engage with adult social care, support services and the police as required.

7. Recommended Reading:

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England \(September 2017\)](#)

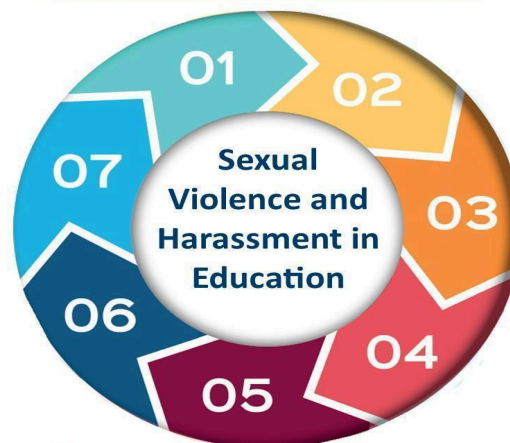
[Hackett, S. \(2014\) Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours.](#)

NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

6. What should we do?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

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



For school safeguarding support and training go to:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/schools-2>

4. Key Statistics

Evidence and crime statistics suggest that anywhere from 1/5 to 2/3's of sexual abuse is committed by other children and young people. The NSPCC uses the figure of 1/3 as a mid-way point between the lower end and the higher end of the estimates.

37% of female students and 6% of male students at mixed-sex schools have personally experienced some form of sexual harassment at school. Girls are significantly more likely to be victimised with unwanted sexual messages and images from their peers online, with 31% of female respondents aged 13-17 years saying they had experienced this in 2019 compared to 11% of male respondents.

5. What is the impact?

Sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. All staff should be aware of indicators and importance of making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated / not dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter" / challenging behaviours (such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts). Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. The school safeguarding procedures should be transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents and carers.

1. What is Peer Sexual Abuse?

It's normal for children to display a range of sexual behaviours as they grow up, but sometimes their behaviour can be harmful to themselves and others. Around a third of child sexual abuse is committed by other children and young people (Hackett, 2014). We call this peer sexual abuse.

Peer Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- physical and sexual abuse / sexual harassment and violence / emotional harm / on and offline bullying / teenage relationship abuse

2. What is the context?

Peer sexual abuse can happen in a range of settings, including: at school / at home / in public spaces / at parties / at a friend's house / online. It can take place in spaces which are supervised or unsupervised. Within a school context, for example, peer-on-peer sexual abuse might take place in spaces such as toilets, the playground and outdoor areas, corridors and when children are travelling to and from school (Contextual Safeguarding Network, 2020).

It should be recognised that the behaviour in question is harmful to both the perpetrator (who is a child) and the victim. Behaviour may be intimate or non-intimate.

3. Why is it important?

Young people can be confused about whether or not they have experienced peer sexual abuse. Reasons for this include:

Confusion about what constitutes 'normal' sexual activity / they don't know whether they gave consent (N.B no-one can consent to being abused) / they were using substances when the abuse took place / the abuse was carried out by a friend or partner / the abuse took place online; and/or they blame themselves for what happened.

Parents & professionals don't always know the most appropriate way to respond to children who display harmful sexual behaviour and/or who have experienced peer sexual abuse.

7. Further Reading

[Peer on peer abuse | Safeguarding Network - confidence in safeguarding](#)

[Protecting children from peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

Department for Education advice: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[What is peer-on-peer abuse? - schools, early years, further education and skills](#)

6. What should you do?

It's important that adults who work or volunteer with children can identify if sexualised behaviour becomes harmful or abusive, and respond proportionally to keep all the children involved safe. This also includes knowing how to proactively:

- Respond to disclosure or a concern raised
- Initiate a discussion with your safeguarding lead
- Take immediate action
- Make a referral when appropriate (for the victim and also perpetrator who may be a child in need).



4. What is the impact?

Experiencing peer sexual abuse can have a long-lasting negative impact on a child's wellbeing that can reach into adulthood. Effects can include:

- mental health issues – such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, self-harming
- challenging behaviour – such as substance misuse, sexualised behaviour, offending
- relationship problems – for example intimacy issues, having unstable relationships, unable to form or sustain friendships

5. Spotting the signs and symptoms

- absence from school or disengagement from school activities
- physical injuries / mental or emotional health issues
- becoming withdrawn – lack of self esteem / lack of sleep / alcohol or substance misuse
- changes in behaviour / inappropriate behaviour for age / abusive towards others

As with all safeguarding issues, peer on peer abuse can impact on children and young people without these characteristics.

For more local partnership information:

[Harmful Sexual Behaviour - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
[Child Abuse Campaign - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

1 Background

Social media has revolutionised the way we connect with each other. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are now used by one in four people worldwide. Many young people have never known a world without instant access to social networking platforms, and this has transformed the way in which this generation interact and communicate with each other.

2 Why does it matter?

Adolescence and early adulthood is a critical time for social and emotional development, and so understanding the effects of social media on health at this stage is of particular importance. Whilst social media can be a hugely positive influence, it also has the potential for being a negative and destructive influence on mental well-being, particularly for children and young people.

3 Why does it matter?

Research suggests a typical teenager will check their phone on average 150 times per day and will take an average of 12 selfies before sharing 1, with just under 50% of young people also adding a filter to 'improve' their appearance. Posts on Social Media will therefore often present an 'idealised' view which creates unrealistic expectations.

7 Further Information

Please see the links below for more information about mental health and internet safety
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/mental-health/>
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/internet-safety/>
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/new-out-of-hours-mental-health-advice-line-1/>

6 How to respond

Professionals need to be aware of both the positive and negative influences of social media. Do not be distracted by the technology, mental health concerns are a safeguarding issue.

Questions for professionals:

Do you routinely ask about social media use when assessing a child/family?

Do you talk to children about safe social media use and their broader online behaviour?



<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/>

4 Key statistics

91% of 16-24 year olds use the internet for social networking: Rates of anxiety and depression in young people have risen 70% in the past 25 years: Social media use is linked with increased rates of anxiety, depression and poor sleep: Cyber bullying is a growing problem with 7 in 10 young people saying they have experienced it.

5 Positive experiences

Social networking offers young people an opportunity to understand, the health experiences of others. Sharing problems or issues with friends, peers and broader social networks can be met with positive reaction. Nearly seven in 10 teens report receiving support on social media during tough or challenging times. Social media can act as an effective platform for accurate and positive self-expression, letting young people put forward their best self.

1 What is it?

..“the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.”

Working Together 2018

2 What is it?

Effective safeguarding is about vigilance. Organisations and individuals whose work brings them into contact with children and young people must have an awareness of safeguarding, abuse, neglect and maltreatment.

3 Why is it important?

There have been a number of cases over the years, where children have been seriously harmed or died. When these cases have been reviewed it has been shown that with better safeguarding processes the child may well have been protected.

7 Further Information

For more information about safeguarding:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/concerned-about-a-child/>

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/multi-agency-thresholds/>

6 How to respond

Receive - Listen actively

Reassure - ‘You’ve done the right thing by coming to me’,

Respond - Tell what you are going to do

Report - As soon as possible, to your Safeguarding Lead or the Integrated Front Door (0151 606 2008)

Record — facts not opinions



<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk>

4 Types of abuse

Abuse falls into 4 categories:

Physical—hitting, biting, slapping

Emotional—belittling, name calling, ignoring

Neglect—lack of food, clothing, emotional or developmental support

Sexual—direct sexual contact, forming a sexual ‘relationship’ with a child.

5 Recognising signs

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect: behaviour changes, aggressive withdrawn or clingy; ill-fitting clothes, poor hygiene; problems at school, regularly missing from school; parents who are dismissive and non-responsive; children who are concerned for/ responsible for younger siblings.

1. 72 hours missing

Strategy meeting should be convened. Serious Notification Form sent to Local Authority. Multi-agency meetings should continue weekly if child continues to be missing. Press release discussed.

2. 3 missing episodes in 30 days

Case to be reviewed by IFD if no support in place. If case is in Early Help the Lead Professional should convene a Family Meeting to determine if existing plan is working.

If case is in Childrens Social Care there should be consideration for a Strategy Meeting or review of current plan

3. 9 missing episodes in 90 days

Case should be reviewed by IFD to see if it an open case.

If case is in Early Help the Lead Professional should convene a Family Meeting to determine if existing plan is working. Needs and risks should be identified and referred back to the IFD.

If case is in Childrens Social Care there should be consideration for a Strategy Meeting or review of current plan

Police MFH co-ordinator to be invited to all meetings

7. Return Home Interviews

Catch22 will endeavour to complete a return interview within 72hrs of the child being found and seen safe and well by Police. The return interview is sent to Police Missing from Home Coordinator, allocated social care and or IFD. These return interviews should inform the child's plan (EH, CiN, CP, CLA)

6. Catch22

For Wirral Looked after Children who are placed outside of the borough, it is the responsibility of the allocated social worker to inform Catch22 of this missing episode in order that they can carry out the return interview. Catch22 aim to reduce missing episodes with young people by offering direct work where appropriate.



4. Absent/Away from Placement

When a child or young person is identified as not being at a location they are expected to be, the reporting individual must take proactive steps to trace the child's whereabouts prior to contacting the police.

5. Absent/Away from Placement

Consider possible risks of CSE, substance misuse, family members where they have previously been removed from. A Care Planning meeting should be held if the child is persistently absent to ensure the child is safeguarded.

1 Background

Sexting means sending sexually explicit messages or images/videos. These can be sent by any messaging service and are often sent via social media. Sexting is sometimes known as 'trading nudes', 'dirties', and 'pic-for-pic'. Sexting is being increasingly used by young people as a 'pre-relationship' activity.

2 Why does it matter?

Sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. The young person is breaking the law if they: take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend; share an image of a child; store a video of a child, even if that child gave permission.

However as of January 2016 the police can choose to record a crime was committed but not take formal action if its not in the public interest.

3 Why does it matter?

Studies suggest that up to a third of 15 year olds have shared a nude or semi-nude image of themselves. Studies have also shown that 90% of those that have received a sext have subsequently shared it. Young people often perceive sexting as 'no big deal' but the consequences of sharing explicit images can be far-reaching.

7 Further Information

Please see the links below for more information about mental health and internet safety

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/sexting/>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/>
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/sexting-advice-professionals>
<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/sexting/>

6 How to respond

Professionals should:

Talk to children about safe social media use , listen without judgement.

Ensure your focus remains child-focused.

Report to the Police and Social Care any concerns particularly where the child is under 13 or particularly vulnerable, or where there is adult involvement.

Try to get the image removed by contacting the website or Internet Watch Foundation (IWF).

4 Why does it matter?

When an image is shared online all control is lost and that image is in the public domain. This means that photos or videos which a young person may have shared privately could still be end up being shared between adults they don't know. These images have also been known to resurface later on in life and been used as blackmail or 'sextortion'.

5 Why does it happen?

There may be many reasons why a young person shares this kind of image. They may feel under pressure, or may feel it helps them fit in. They may trust the person they are sending it to, or love them. It may be an extension of adolescent 'risk-taking' behaviour, or been seen as 'just banter'.



<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/>

1 What is it?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) refer to stressful or traumatic events that children and young people can be exposed to as they are growing up. ACEs range from experiences that directly harm a child, such as physical, verbal or sexual abuse, and physical or emotional neglect, to those that affect the environments in which children grow up, such as parental separation, domestic violence, mental illness, alcohol abuse, drug use or imprisonment.

2 What is it?

There is a distinction between 'normal' stressful life events, such as parental divorce or illness of a loved one, and adverse childhood experiences, very traumatic life events, such as being or seeing someone else physically or sexually abused. These are experiences that will often be associated with post-traumatic stress disorder.

3 Why it matters

The first UK study in Blackburn with Darwin (BwD; Bellis et al, 2014a) found that increasing ACEs were strongly associated with adverse behavioural, health and social outcomes across the life course. Further studies found that almost half of the general population reported at least one ACE and over 8% reported four or more.

7 What should we do?

- Think about how those experiences will have an impact on the child's healthy development and on their behaviours.
- Recognise the signs, and see beyond a child just 'acting out'.
- Try to help them become more grounded, give them choices and allow them to feel more in control.
- Understand that it is likely this will have an impact on any attachment for that child and there will be mistrust. We need to try and build a relationship with the child that is different to ones they have experienced previously.
- Finally, it is important to remember that ACEs tend to be passed from generation to generation.

6 What is the impact?

ACEs research shows that there is a strong dose-response relationship between ACEs and poor physical and mental health, chronic disease (such as type II diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; heart disease; cancer), increased levels of violence, and lower academic success both in childhood and adulthood.



4 Why it matters

When exposed to stressful situations, the "fight, flight or freeze" response floods our brain with corticotrophin-releasing hormones (CRH), which usually forms part of a normal and protective response that subsides once the stressful situation passes. However, when repeatedly exposed to ACEs, CRH is continually produced by the brain, which results in the child remaining permanently in this heightened state of alert and unable to return to their natural relaxed and recovered state.

5 What is the impact?

Children and young people who are exposed to ACEs have increased – and sustained – levels of stress. In this heightened neurological state a young person is unable to think rationally and it is physiologically impossible for them to learn or develop in the same way a child not having these experiences will.

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces/>

1 Background

This case was considered by the WSCP Case Review committee following removal of the 5 Anderson children as a result of neglect. The case did not meet the CSPR threshold but a multi-agency learning review was agreed.

2 Purpose of the review

The purpose of a learning review is to identify learning for the multi-agency partnership which will strengthen the safeguarding system. Beyond individual cases reviews also often provide a window into wider systems (ways of working/ processes) which may need to be changed.

3 Concerns

The family were first known to services when Jacob the oldest child was 3 months old. Concerns identified at that point were neglect and contact with maternal grandmother. Over the following 8 years all 5 children were managed across the thresholds with the main concern always being neglect.

7 Further Information

All learning is embedded in training. In addition the WSCP will be publishing a summary report of the findings.

For further information on Child Practice Safeguarding Reviews and Learning Reviews go the WSCP website.

6 Learning

- Tools were under-utilised across the partnership, particularly the Graded Care Profile, and where assessment was started it was not completed
- Significant changes in structures in the LA impacted how services were delivered, meaning that documents were inaccessible to those involved with the family.

4 Key Practice Episodes

Analysis of the combined chronology revealed 3 Key Practice Episodes (KPE's). These KPEs helped frame the discussion at the learning review meeting:

- Effectiveness of Multi Agency Working
- Over-optimism in parents parenting ability
- Evidence based decision making

5 Learning

- The family would have benefitted from an extended period before services were withdrawn. It was evident that there was significant improvement in the quality of parenting when support was available.
- On a number of occasions workers escalated concerns. This was often not followed up and formal escalation procedures were not followed.



1 What is it?

Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside their home, either from adults or other young people.

2 Why it matters

Traditional approaches to protecting children/young people from harm have focussed on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, and don't always address the time that children/young people spend outside the home.

3 Why it matters

As children move from early childhood and into adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time socialising independently of their families. The nature of young people's relationships, that they form in these settings, inform the extent to which they encounter protection or abuse.

7 What should we do?

Identify the ways in which young people can change the social conditions where abuse has occurred, and encourage self-responsibility for making these changes. Engage with individuals and sectors who have a bearing on social contexts, ie shopkeepers, local policing, community leaders, to make environments safer.

6 What should we do?

A Contextual Safeguarding approach aims to disrupt harmful extra-familial contexts rather than move young people away from them. The approach seeks to identify the ways in which professionals, adults and young people can change the social conditions of environments in which abuse has occurred.



4 Peer relationships

Research tells us that peer relationships are increasingly influential during adolescence. If a young person forms friendships in contexts characterised by violence and/or harmful attitudes these relationships will be anti-social and unsafe.

5 What are the risks?

There are a wide range of potential risks where the prime cause of harm is outside of the family. This list isn't exhaustive but includes: peer on peer abuse; exploitation and online abuse; missing episodes; gang involvement; radicalisation; trafficking and modern slavery.

1 What is SFEF?

Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) is a new model for working with children, young people and their families across levels 3 and 4 (Team Around the Family, Child in Need and Child Protection) of the Wirral Continuum of Need.

2 The principles of SFEF

1. Understand the world of the child(ren).
2. Understand the world of the adults
3. Recognise family strengths as well as concerns.
4. Engage families in the change process.
5. Measure change through actions and interventions that lead to child-focused outcomes.

3 The lived experience

The focus of the model is on understanding how issues within the family affect the child's daily lived experience. After a referral is made the child is spoken to about their 'day' from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to sleep. In this process their thoughts and feelings will be explored.

7 The plan

The plan will identify: Recognised strengths of the family; What professionals are concerned about (what needs to change); Who is going to complete actions (and by when).

The plan will be reviewed regularly to measure positive changes to the lived experience of the child(ren).

6 Traffic lights

Traffic lights will be used as an easy visual representation of levels of concern.

RED - developmental needs are not being met likely to cause significant harm to the child
AMBER - developmental needs are not being met may impact on the health and development of the child
GREEN - developmental needs are being met

4 Single assessment

All practitioners in contact with the family will then be asked to feed into a single assessment. In the case of Child in Need and Child Protection this will be done via Liquid Logic. This assessment is co-ordinated and analysed by the Social Worker. All practitioners and the family will see the final assessment before the first multi-agency meeting.

5 Multi-agency meetings

The meeting room should be set up in a horseshoe shape with the focus being on the issues identified in the assessment, which are displayed at the front of the room. The focus of the discussion is then on how any issues will be addressed. The family are involved in this discussion with their views on concerns and strengths being explored.



1 What is it?

County Lines is the term commonly used to describe the approach taken by gangs and criminal networks to supply class A drugs from urban to suburban areas across the country, including market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines known as 'deal lines' or 'graft lines'.

2 How it works

Typically, the 'graft phone' is kept away from the area where the drugs are sold and a relay system is used to contact those acting as dealers. A local property which is often occupied by a vulnerable person is used as a base for the groups activities. The acquiring of the property is often by force or coercion and is known as 'cuckooing'.

3 Why it matters

Groups and Organised Crime Groups exploit children and teenagers to deal on their behalf. Children are seen as easily controlled and inexpensive to resource. These children will often fall into some form of debt to the group and this can lead to violence and assaults against them.

7 What should we do?

Be cautious with the language we use. Some language minimises the risks and reality of the child's situation, so professionals should avoid using such terms in their recording and conversations.

Use the County Lines and Exploitation Toolkit for guidance.

If a child or young person is at risk of harm or abuse please report it to the Integrated Front Door on **0151 606 2008**. In an emergency always dial **999**.

6 What are the signs?

Recognising a child who is being exploited means seeing changes in behaviour including; going missing from home or absent from school without explanation; mixing with new friends their parents don't know; experimental drug use, often cannabis; having more than one mobile phone; appearing nervous/scared/evasive/secretive; suffering injuries they can't explain; having tickets for train or coach travel.

4 Why it matters

The children involved often do not perceive themselves to be victims of exploitation, as they consider they have acted voluntarily. This is further complicated as the exploited children often receive cash or gifts/drugs from their abusers as a means to groom them.

5 Recognising vulnerability

There are several factors that will make a child more vulnerable to being exploited including: Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household; Drug or alcohol misuse; History of abuse; Recent bereavement or loss; Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships; Friends with children who are exploited; Lacking friends from the same age group; Living in residential care; Low self-esteem or self-confidence.



<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/child-exploitation/>



1 What is an escalation?

If you feel that a practitioner or an agency is not acting in the best interests of the child, young person or family, you have a responsibility to respectfully challenge the practitioner or agency, and escalate your concerns.

2 When would you escalate?

When working with practitioners from other agencies there will at times be differences of opinion or concerns about professional practice in relation to a child, young person or family. The new WSCB procedure outlines the escalation process including time scales and principles for resolution. There are 4 key stages to resolving multi-agency escalations.

3 Stage 1

- Initial attempts should be made **between workers** to resolve the issue
- If resolution cannot be achieved professionals must escalate to their **safeguarding lead and/or team manager**
- Take Action Within 24 Hours of Concern
- Record the escalation
- Notify the WSCB

4 Stage 2

- The Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead should discuss the concerns/response with their opposite manager in the other agency.
- If resolution cannot be achieved professionals must notify their Senior Managers (or in the case of schools the Chair of Governors alongside the Head)
- WSCB to be notified if resolved

5 Stage 3

- The Senior Manager will escalate to the WSCB Board Representative who will arrange a meeting to seek resolution.
- If agreement cannot be achieved, the matter should be brought to the attention of the WSCB Business Manager who will refer the matter to the WSCB Chair.

7 Record keeping

- Agencies should record their use of the Escalation Procedure (Stages 1-3) and be able to report outcomes of escalations to the WSCB.
- The child's record should be updated
- The WSCB will keep a record of all escalations and outcomes at Stage 4, and may request information about the outcomes of escalations at Stages 2 and 3.

6 Stage 4

- The WSCB Chair will seek written representation, and may request a meeting with those involved.
- The WSCB Chair will make a recommendation on the most appropriate way to proceed and communicate this within 5 days of notification.



7 Minute Briefing

Neglect

1. Background

Neglect is the most common reason for referral to Childrens Services. The definition of neglect is not as objective as other forms of abuse, and so relies on professional assessment.

2. What is it?

Professionals will often intervene with physical environment cases of neglect. However the the child will often see neglect in terms of emotional issues.

4. How to recognise it

Failure to provide: adequate food, shelter and clothing; adequate supervision; access to medical care; failure to protect from physical harm; unresponsive to child's emotional needs.

3. What is it?

Neglect is not a one off event but rather an accumulation of issues over time. It can happen to children of all ages including teenagers

5. Causes

In many cases the cause is recorded as either poor parental health (54%), domestic abuse (49%), substance misuse (49%), alcohol misuse (38%). This is unlikely to be a 'quick fix'.

6. Why it matters

Neglect can be fateful and affects the global development of children. Neglect can also affect longer term development with negative consequences for physical and mental health over the lifetime

7. Action

Look out for low level concerns and intervene early to assist families before crisis. Ensure you listen to the child's story. Complete an assessment to decide on assistance needed. Refer to targeted/social care.

7 Minute Briefing

Child Sexual Exploitation

1. Background

Child Sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of abuse that can happen to any child irrespective of social background.

This is an issue of abuse not a lifestyle choice. Children who are sexually exploited are the victims

Male victims are very under-reported.

2. What is it?

CSE often involves a child receiving 'something' e.g. gifts, money, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes etc. for performing sexual activities. Many young people will not see themselves as victims as they are led to believe they are making their own choices, but they aren't.

3. Why it matters?

Children who become exploited in this type of abuse face huge risks to their physical, psychological and emotional health.

Victims require long term intensive support.

The perpetrators are criminals and must be pursued through the courts

4. Categories of CSE

CSE can take various forms including: Online grooming; Gang exploitation; Boyfriend/girlfriend model; Party model; Street model; Peer Model

CSE offences always include an element of grooming – manipulating a child in order to exploit them.

5. Vulnerability

Factors that will make a child more vulnerable include; Missing from home; disengaged from education; feeling alienated from family; lack of friends/peers; mental health issues; criminality.

Victims will often become secretive and estranged from family and friends.

6. Local issues

Cases referred locally go to the MASCE for review.

Most recent statistics show; 81% of referrals are for girls; the majority of cases include an aspect of internet use.

Children who go missing are particularly vulnerable.

7. Action

Recognise the warning signs of CSE. Use the screening tool and consult if you have concerns.

Make a referral to the MASH team on 0151 606 2008. Complete a CSE 1 form. Document all activity.

Further info:
www.listentomystory.co.uk

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/child-sexual-exploitation/>

7 Minute Briefing

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

1. What is Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

- HSB can be defined as :
'One or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. These can range from using sexually explicit words and phrases to full penetrative sex with other children or adults'.

2. HSB Behaviours

- HSB includes both contact and non- contact behaviours (e.g. grooming, sexting, taking pictures) and the young person has displayed a harmful behavioural threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate a victim.

3. Consent

- To give consent to sex or a sexual act a person must be 16 years old or over, understand, and be able to make a choice or change their mind. If a young person is under the age of 13 years, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 they cannot legally consent to any form of sexual activity.

4. Identifying HSB

- To help professionals to identify behaviour which might be harmful Brook have published a traffic light tool (available on the WSCB website)
- The tool provides a continuum of sexual behaviours from normal and healthy to harmful and provides a resource to identify, assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviours

5. Response to children displaying HSB

- Using guidance document and traffic light tool professionals assess whether behaviour is healthy, inappropriate or harmful
- Any inappropriate or harmful behaviour triggers completion of a request for services form and strategy meeting

6. Key Information

- Around 90% of children who engage in HSB are adolescent boys
- Common features amongst children who present with HSB are a history of multiple abuse and disadvantage, and having a learning disability
- Both perpetrators and victims must be viewed under safeguarding and child protection procedures

7. Useful Links

WSCB Multi-agency guidance:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/6-3-children-young-people-display-sexually-inappropriate-harmful-behaviour/>

Brook Traffic Light Tool:

<https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>

7 Minute Briefing

Private Fostering

1. Background

Since the Children's Act 2004 it has been a legal responsibility for Local Authorities to recognise, monitor and support any child in their area that is being 'privately fostered'.

2. What is Private Fostering?

This is an informal arrangement where a child up to the age of 16 (or 18 if registered with a disability) is living with someone not classed as family under the Children's Act 1989, for a period of 28 days or more.

3. Why it matters?

It is believed a lot of children are living in these circumstances unrecognised which could lead to abuse.

Victoria Climbié was brought into the country by a distant relative who went on to abuse and murder her.

4. Considerations

The period of the arrangement could be broken by a brief visit home may still be classed as Private Fostering. So does not need to be 28 days consistently.

The parents will still hold Parental Responsibility and will need to be consulted when decisions about care are made.

5. Responsibility of the Private Fosterer

To notify the Local Authority before entering into any arrangements.

To agree to checks and assessment being made.

To agree the terms of the care with the parents or whoever holds parental responsibility.

6. Responsibility of Local Authority

Complete a Child in Need Assessment of suitability.

Complete checks on the adults in the household, DBS, Criminal Records.

Assign an IRO to undertake regular reviews of the circumstances.

7. Action

Recognise when a child you are working with may be in this situation, or about to be.

Make a safeguarding referral to the MASH Team on 0151 606 2008.

Give as much information about the child and the circumstances as possible.

7 Minute Briefing

Domestic Abuse

1. Background

Domestic abuse can affect anyone from any background. Whilst the majority of cases are male on female violence there has been an increase of female on male violence and violence in same sex relationships.

2. What is it?

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality'.

3. Types of abuse

Domestic abuse can take the following forms: Physical/sexual abuse and violence; psychological abuse and name-calling; financial abuse and control of money in the house; emotional abuse and emotional blackmail.

4. Why it matters?

In 90% of cases children are in the same or the next room when the incident occurs. They may be emotionally distressed witnessing abuse, or physically harmed themselves.

5. Local issues

The highest risk age for women is between 25-45. The highest risk of witnessing domestic abuse is in children aged under 5. The most referrals come from the Birkenhead area.

6. How to respond

Make sure that any immediate harm is managed. Inform the police if risk of harm is imminent. Discuss safety planning with the victim. Ensure safety of children is paramount.

7. Action

Recognise warning signs. Complete the DASH form with the adult victim (over 16) and the RIM form with the children. Make a referral to the MASH team. Refer to MARAC in those cases where risk is high.

1. What is Prevent?

Prevent is 1 of the 4 areas of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The three main objectives of Prevent are: 1) Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism. 2) Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support 3) Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

2. Who is Prevent For?

Prevent initiatives tackle both the causes & risk factors that can lead someone to become radicalised, It can directly support those who are at risk through early intervention. Prevent works in a similar way to other safeguarding processes, designed to protect individuals whereby the level of intervention increases with the level of risk. Under the Prevent Duty all public sector agencies have a responsibility to ensure their staff, service providers & volunteers have a good understanding of risks, are trained to recognise radicalisation and associated behaviours and how to report concerns.

3. What is Radicalisation and Extremism?

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and in some cases then participates in terrorist activity. There is no one process or indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process is different for each individual and can take place over an extended period or a short time frame.

Extremism is defined as, vocal or active opposition to British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

7. Further Information

- [Safeguarding Children and Young People against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen2.html>
- [Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel \(PMAP\) guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

6. What does the Prevent Co-ordinator Do?

The Prevent Co-ordinator (Alison Burnett on Wirral) works with the Police, local authority, Education establishments, health and other public sector agencies to co-ordinate Prevent delivery and this includes:

* Training & Awareness, * Advice and Guidance, * Prevent duty responsibilities * Targeted support * Engagement with Voluntary, community, civil society and faith groups.

Alison Burnett (for Wirral and Liverpool — Alison.Burnett@liverpool.gov.uk)



4. What to do if you have a concern?

NOTICE—CHECK—SHARE

If you notice a change in an individual that concerns you, in that they may be vulnerable to radicalisation, follow your organisation's policy/ Prevent & 'channel' referral process.

Check your concern with a designated safeguarding lead and contact the Prevent local co-ordinator for advice.

Share the concern with the Integrated Front Door and police by completing the Prevent referral form.

5. What Happens with the referral?

Referrals are screened and if suitable for multi-agency consideration, it is passed to the Channel team. What is Channel? Channel is an voluntary, multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremism or terrorist behaviour. Multi-agency partners work collectively assess the risk to an individual, decide whether an intervention is necessary and develop an appropriate support package for each referral.

**Prevent Radicalisation and Extremism - Wirral
Safeguarding Children Partnership**

Appendix D - Safeguarding and Sexual Abuse - checklist for schools

School	Safeguarding lead
St Mary's Catholic College	John Wilson

The DFE have launched a review into safeguarding and sexual abuse

Useful links:

- Browne Jacobson has produced a guide to ensuring policies and procedures are up to date.
- Wirral LA has sent a link to an updated Model Safeguarding Policy & DFE Updates.
- Wirral LA also sent a copy of both the model policy and the appendix and will be producing a 7-minute briefing to use with staff and to be added to the policy appendix in due course.

1	The availability of your policy on the website: - can it be easily found by parents, pupils and the community?	Yes - Under Policy Section
	- Is it the most up to date version?	Yes - September 2024
	- You may also want to add to your website the NSPCC's new bespoke helpline number for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk .	Yes - Included
2	Please date when your policy has been reviewed and detail who was involved in the process.	September 2024- HT/DLS and Governors
3	Does your safeguarding policy meet the requirements as set out in <u>Browne Jacobson's advice note</u> ?	Yes
4	Child on Child Abuse Make sure the policy: - sets out the 'why', including the harm caused by this abuse and that staff will be alert to it	Yes

	- states that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable	Yes
	- lists and describes the forms of child-on-child abuse	Yes
	- says that such abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'	Yes
	- explains that different gender issues can be prevalent	Yes
	- sets out the steps you take in your setting to minimise or prevent child-on-child abuse	Yes
	- explains that all reports will be passed to the DSL immediately and investigated, and what the process entails	Yes
	- states that when reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)	Yes
	- explains how you support those involved	Yes
5	Staff training - For each individual staff member, can I review a document that tells me the extent to which they understood the training/our policies?	National College safeguarding exam
	- For my staff group as a whole, can I review a document that highlights the knowledge gaps?	National College safeguarding exam
	- Can I review and understand those knowledge gaps quickly and easily, and take steps to plug them?	National College safeguarding exam
6	Curriculum, culture and student reporting Can you show how you teach students about: - safeguarding	Safeguarding posters around The college. Safeguarding lead pictures

		around the college. Covered in the PSHE & RSE programmes.
	- healthy and respectful relationships	Covered in the PSHE & RSE programmes.
	- respectful behaviour and consent	Covered in the PSHE & RSHE programmes.
	- how sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong	Covered in the PSHE & RSHE programmes.
	Can you explain how you promote an open, honest and respectful culture in your setting?	Covered in the PSHE & RSHE programmes.
	Can you explain how your RSE arrangements support this culture?	Yes - Use of the Ten Ten 'Life to the Full' programme.
7	Reporting Ofsted wants to <u>'ensure schools have appropriate processes in place to allow pupils to report concerns freely, knowing these will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately'</u> . - Do you have a clear pathway to support a pupil who is subject to these types of abuses?	Yes
	- Can you explain what this looks like for your school in terms of processes? Do you have a clear support plan and does it consider timescales and tracking of cases?	Yes - Discussed through GAS / AIM
8	Recording - Do you have a clear system for recording incidents (either electronically or online)?	Yes - CPOMS
	- Can you explain how you are tracking police involvement when appropriate and keeping in touch with an investigation?	Through Strategy meetings if involved.

	- Is all of this recorded, and are you recording any decisions the school makes and why?	Yes - Will usually be due to advice received.
	- Do you know how many incidents have occurred?	Yes - Reported to governors.
9	Communication What does your communications plan entail? - Do you know how you will communicate with parents about the issue of child-on-child abuses / sexual abuse in education?	Yes - Through college newsletters and curriculum documentation for college wide issues and through accepted process of telephone and face to face communication for individual concerns.
	- Do you know how you will talk to them when an incident has occurred?	Yes
10	Implementation - Do you need to consider a working group to make decisions on the aspects above? Who would you include? (e.g. HT / DHT / DSL's / Chair of Governors / Safeguarding Gov? – someone from IT dept to track data?)	The inspire team and safeguarding team would work on any escalation procedures. Reporting procedures are in place through the termly governors/trust reporting forms.

Appendix E - School Poster showing safeguarding Leads

SAFEGUARDING TEAM – SMCC



Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mr J Wilson



Safeguarding and CLA coordinator

Miss L Hitchin



Mrs C Moor



Mrs M Todd



Mrs M Wilson

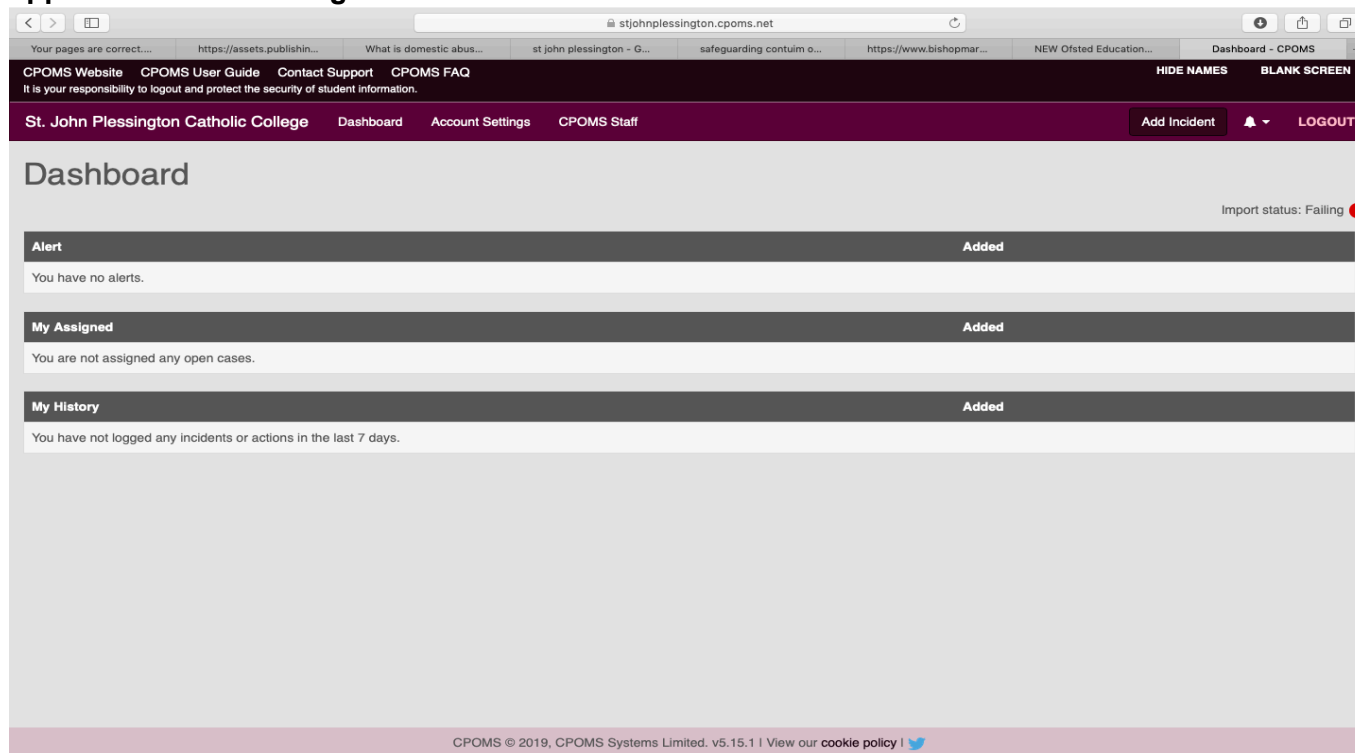


Mr M Loon



Miss N Lam

Appendix F – How to log a concern on CPOMS



Following a discussion with a DSL you may be asked to record your concern on CPOMS. The website can be accessed <https://stjohnplessington.cpoms.net/> You will enter your user name and password and select Add Incident.

stjohnplessington.cpoms.net

CPOMS Website CPOMS User Guide Contact Support CPOMS FAQ

It is your responsibility to logout and protect the security of student information.

St. John Plessington Catholic College Dashboard Account Settings CPOMS Staff

SHOW NAMES BLANK SCREEN

Add Incident

LOGOUT

Student

Incident

Today is lesson ***** told me that they had self harmed at home. I noticed visible marks on their arm. Reported to P McLoughlin.

Categories

☐ Action ☐ Allegation v staff ☒ Category ☐ CLA ☐ Mental Health Issues

Category Subcategories

☐ E safety ☐ Other ☐ Prevent ☒ Safeguarding

Linked student(s)

Begin typing a student's name

Type a student's name to link them to this incident.

Body map

Date/Time

Mon 02 September 2019 9:40PM

Status

Active

Assign to

Begin typing a staff member's name

Files

Click to browse or drag a file to upload

You should then log concerns under the pupils record once searched for the name required.

You can add further students to the referral by clicking linked students

A body map allows you to identify concerns where you have noticed marks or injuries to a pupil

Ensure that you select the DSL you discussed your concern to the assign to section

If you have any files / images linking to the concerns these can be uploaded.

YOU MUST COMPLETE THE REFERRAL BEFORE LEAVING SITE ON THE SAME DAY IT WAS REPORTED.

SELECT GENERAL CONCERN

Appendix G- Learning from Serious Case Review in Wirral



National Learning from SCR's -2016 DfE triennial report on learning Briefing Note for Partners

SCR - Domestic Abuse

- 54% of families had current or previous domestic abuse
- Understanding the roles of men in the family
- Seeing the mother alone
- Avoiding an over-reliance on the mother's ability to protect their children
- Seeing the bigger picture
- Maintaining a healthy scepticism
- Talking about domestic abuse between agencies
- Understanding the complex nature of domestic violence relationships
- Understanding the impact on children
- Helping the mother to understand the impact on the children

SCR – Teenagers

- Teenagers (14-18) are the second most vulnerable group
- Listen to what young people are trying to say: Disclosure; lead practitioner and advocate: self-harm or suicide; balancing wishes with best interests
- Keeping the focus on the young people: Treating 16-17 year olds as children; helping young people access services; understand risky and challenging behaviour; keep clear chronologies
- Service provision: Early intervention; accommodation provision; sexual health provision.

SCR - Headline National Findings

- 1 in 5 SCR's is undertaken on a child currently or previously on a child protection plan
- About 60% of children are/have been known to children's social care
- 43% of all SCR's are undertaken on babies less than 1 year old (most vulnerable group)
- Teenagers (14-18) are the second most vulnerable group
- Neglect is an underlying feature in over 60% of all SCR cases
- Poor information sharing and ineffective multi-agency working are a feature of almost all SCR's
- 45% of families had had frequent house moves
- 63% had current or previous adult mental health concerns
- 33% had current or previous substance misuse
- 45% had a parent with a criminal conviction
- 75% of families did not cooperate with agencies
- 75% of children had lived with at least one of domestic abuse, parental mental ill health or substance abuse – the Toxic Trio

SCR - Neglect

- Neglect is a factor in 60% of serious case reviews
- Be aware of children who are more vulnerable to neglect
- Monitor missed appointments
- Be vigilant to accidents and injuries
- Effectively assess parental capacity and ability to change
- Understand the long-term impact of neglect
- Evidence-based Assessment and Intervention Work using assessment tools
- Focus on improved outcomes for the child's daily lived experience a
- Avoid Case Drift

SCR - Child Sexual Exploitation/ CE

- Have an awareness of the warning signs
- Use a comprehensive assessment
- Draw on knowledge from different agencies
- Understand the 'capacity to consent'
- Balance the young person's rights with the risks posed.
- Perseverance and patience
- Maintain a child-centred approach
- On-going support

Did you know? Learning from Serious Case Reviews

Teenagers can be just as vulnerable and in need of our help as younger children

Be aware of the needs of vulnerable teenagers

Safeguarding Teenagers is Everyone's Responsibility

For more information

Wirral Safeguarding Children Board



**National Learning from Serious Case Reviews
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Learning from SCR's where Child Sexual Exploitation was a key factor reminds us to:

- Be aware of warning signs of potential CSE and grooming
- Ensure that disclosures from young people about CSE are taken seriously and dealt with as a crime
- Ensure that early assessment is carried out to make sure that individual incidents are addressed
- Complete incident profiles to identify major incidents or incidents that are used to target potential victims
- Identify perpetrators quickly to help ensure a case is built against them by the police
- Ensure that victims of CSE receive ongoing support to protect them further, supported in the future
- Enable a child-centred approach and partnership with designated young people in order to protect and support them

Safeguarding Children from CSE is Everyone's Responsibility

For more information: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/serious-case-reviews/child-sexual-exploitation/>

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>

WSCB March 2018

Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership identify key concerns and finding from both national and local serious case reviews. This information can be found using the link above.

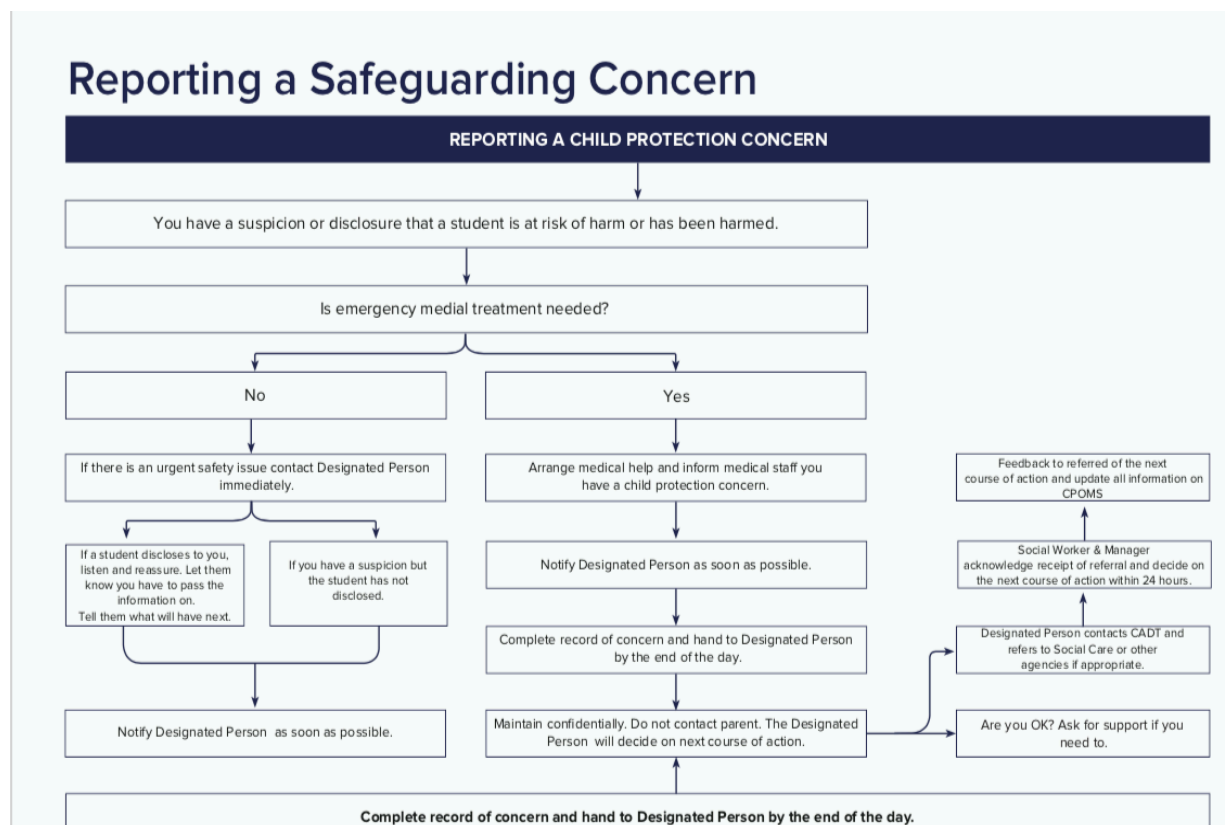
Key findings:

- **There was an equal split between boys and girls as subjects of the reviews**
- **Over half of the reviews undertaken were on children 16 or older. 25% of reviews on children under 3 years old**
- **Neglect featured in over half the cases**
- **MLD, criminal behaviour and exploitation, domestic abuse and transition issues were common features.**

Over half our reviews have been about teenage boys and a number of common themes emerged:

- **Long term neglect;**
- **Lack of positive male role models;**
- **Dysfunctional families – DV, Drug Alcohol Misuse, PMH**
- **ADHD/ ASD/ MLD**
- **Behavioural concerns – usually identified at Primary School**
- **Escalating anti-social behaviour – often related to deteriorating school attendance**
- **Criminal behaviour – criminal exploitation**
- **Poor outcomes**

Appendix H: Social Care Flow Chart -



- If you are concerned about a child speak to the DSL or deputies. You can also make a referral yourself if you have concerns.
- If you would like to have a consultation with a Social Worker prior to making a referral through to Children's Social Care, please call Wirral Integrated Front Door Team on 0151 606 2008. An on-line referral form will need to be completed in all cases unless you deem the child to be at risk of immediate significant harm. Additionally you can speak with our onsite Social worker in school - Kirsty Swift.
- If this is the case the IFD will record the information you provide over the telephone however you must then follow this up with a written Referral Form outlining your concerns. If you feel that a child is in immediate danger you need to ring the police 101/999.

- For any out of hours advice or emergencies please contact Wirral Emergency Duty Team on **0151 677 6557**.
- Again, if you think a child is in immediate danger please call the Police.
- Staff at St Mary's with access to CPOMS can now log concerns on the this system following a discussion with the DSL