

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Northern Counties School

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Policy Control/Monitoring

Version:	V.6.6
Approved by: (Name/Position in Organisation)	D’Arcy Myers Interim CEO
Date:	
Accountability: (Name/Position in Organisation)	Foundation Safeguarding Lead supported by Head of School
Author of policy: (Name/Position in organisation)	Jo Allen Head Teacher of Northern Counties School
Date issued:	November 2017
Revision Cycle:	6 Monthly
Revised (Date):	September 2021
Target audience:	This policy applies to all staff and associates of Northern Counties School including; Teachers/Tutors, Therapists, and Support Staff, Parents, Pupils/Students and members of the schools/college Governors.
Amendments/additions	
Replaces/supersedes:	Previous Versions including March 2021 version
Associated Policies: (insert hyperlinks)	<p>This policy is in response to Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Section 94 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (DfE 2016) (Updates Sept 2019, Sept 2020, Sept 2021) • Working Together To Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (DfE 2017, 2018);
Associated National Guidance	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (DfE 2015) • The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework section 3 – the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, September 2014. • Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges 2021 <p><u>Reference to the key statutory and non-statutory guidance</u></p> <p>The following policy and guidelines were formulated by the School Senior Management Team. The policy complies with the requirements of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Department for Education and Employment circular 2005: Protecting Children from Abuse ▪ Misconduct of Teachers and Workers with Children and Young Persons 11/95 ▪ The Children Act 2004 ▪ Every Child Matters 2003/2004/2005 ▪ Keeping Children Safe 2003 ▪ Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015/2018 ▪ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016/2018/2019/2020/2021 ▪ Information Sharing 2015 ▪ What to do if you think is child is being abused 2015
Document status	<p>This document is controlled electronically and shall be deemed an uncontrolled documented if printed.</p> <p>The document can only be classed as 'Live' on the date of print.</p>

Equality Impact Assessment

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This document forms part of Percy Hedley's commitment to create a positive culture of respect for all staff and service users. The intention is to identify, remove or minimise discriminatory practice in relation to the protected characteristics (race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious or other belief, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity), as well as to promote positive practice and value the diversity of all individuals and communities.

As part of its development this document and its impact on equality has been analysed and no detriment identified.

Version Control Tracker

Version Number	Date	Author/ Title	Status	Comment/Reason for Issue/Approving Body
V.6.3	September 2019	Jo Allen Head of NCS	Approved	Replaces previous versions. Regulatory requirement.
V6.4	September 2020	Jo Allen	Approved	Replaces previous versions. Regulatory requirement.
V6.5	May 2021	Jo Allen	Approved	Replaces previous versions. Regulatory requirement.
V6.6	September 2021	Jo Allen	Approved	Replaces previous versions. Regulatory requirement.

Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive	The Chief Executive is responsible for satisfying themselves that the Director of Residential and Adult Services is fulfilling their managerial responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children and young people.
Headteacher and Governors	To ensure the appropriate deployment of this policy and to ensure that this policy is kept up to date in accordance with current regulations, legislation and guidance and ensure staff comply with this policy.

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Pupils/Student, Parents and Staff	Adherence and compliance to this policy.
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Introduction

This policy is designed to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with safeguarding issues. This ensures that safeguarding concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which ensure positive outcomes for all children and young people.

Northern Counties School does not operate in isolation. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working directly with the children and young people. The school has a statutory duty to assist local authority Social Service Departments acting on behalf of children and young people in need or enquiring in

to allegations of child abuse.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing 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.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding policy:

1. **Prevention:** for example, positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to children and young people.
2. **Protection:** by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
3. **Support:** to children and young people, some of whom may have been abused, and Education Services staff

2. Purpose

This document outlines the practice that is followed to ensure transparent and supportive working that reduces the likelihood of harm to children / young people, as well as procedures to be followed responding to any allegation or concern in relation to a child / young person.

Each child/young person will be treated as an individual and their rights and preferences respected. It is the job of all staff and managers to ensure that children/young people are protected from harm and are able to make choices to keep themselves safe.

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3. Mission Statement

Northern Counties School exists to offer high quality education, care and therapy to children and young people with: sensory impairment; speech and language and communication difficulties; autistic spectrum disorder and profound multiple learning difficulties.

Our central purpose is to provide a unified approach to meeting the special needs of children and young people through the provision of high-quality education, care and therapy to enable them to maximise their potential and achieve success.

We promote a positive environment in which all children and young people are valued, and success and achievements are shared and celebrated.

We ensure all children and young people feel safe and secure in school and ensure they have positive and trusting relationships with staff. Pupil voice is paramount and pupils are always listened to, regardless of their method of communication.

All staff receive training about safeguarding and visitors to the school are encouraged to share any concerns they have with the Head Teacher. Staff are aware, that in addition to the mechanisms in place in school, they may also report their concerns direct to Newcastle City Council's Front Door service.

Children who have been abused or are at risk of abuse are supported by the class team in school, additional support is also available through the school wellbeing team and/or counselling service.

Safeguarding is explored as part of the curriculum, at levels suitable to the age and ability of the child (See also SRE policy). Specific safeguarding with regard to online safety is also covered.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

At Northern Counties School we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We also recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils.

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This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health.

We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

We will always act in the best interests of the child. **The Governing Body should ensure that:**

- They comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the schools is effective.
- All governors are responsible for safeguarding, however there is a named safeguarding governor who will liaise closely with the Head Teacher to review safeguarding policy and procedures as well as reviewing safeguarding trends and actions.
- School has a senior lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.
- There are appropriate policies and procedures in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare, which are followed by all staff.
- There are appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
- An appropriate senior member of staff, from the school leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description.
- The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.
- The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children.
- Their safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).
- They recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies.
- All staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training is regularly updated. Induction and training should be in line with advice from the LSCB.
- In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as

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required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

- The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when consider the well-being and safety of its pupils.
- Children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- Northern Counties School prevent people who are known to pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children. The school should has written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place. Every interview panel has a least one member who has undergone safer recruitment training.
- There are procedures in place to handle allegations against teachers, headteachers, principals, volunteers and other staff.
- There are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.
- The child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse, including those involving sexual violence and harassment, and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with.
- Governors and proprietors should ensure sexting and the school's approach to it is reflected in the child protection policy.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately any systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.
- Staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep all children safe. In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status
- Procedures to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse;
 - the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously;
 - how allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with;

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- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by peer-on-peer abuse will be supported;
- a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of peer-on-peer abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported;
- a statement which makes clear there should be a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off, for example, as “banter”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children;
- recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms peer on peer abuse can take, such as:
- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment.

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Michele Osborne	Governor safeguarding governor	michele.osborne@percyhedley.org.uk

The Headteacher ensures that:

The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are fully implemented and followed by all staff;

They will manage the process and liaise with the LA designated officer (LADO) in the event of allegations of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer

They receives appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated

They will ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the staff to discharge their responsibilities

They will help to create an environment where all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and will address

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any concerns sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with the agreed whistle blowing policies.

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The Designated Safeguarding Leads will:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
- Liaise with the Head Teacher with regard to safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- As required, liaise with designated staff at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member); and Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.
- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.
- Undertake Prevent awareness training
- Refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;

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- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Ensure all pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum;
- Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
- Ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed six monthly and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- Ensure the child protection 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 school in this; and
- Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding. always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns and arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

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The role of school staff:

- ALL staff are important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

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- All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. (Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage, detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children)
- Any staff member who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in this policy.
- The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- All staff are aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include:
 - the child protection policy;
 - the staff code of conduct
 - the role of the designated safeguarding lead. Copies of policies and a copy of Part 1 and annex A of this document (Keeping Children Safe In Education) should be provided to staff at induction.
- All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection 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
- All staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.
- All staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- The Teachers' Standards apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.
- All staff 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 whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social

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care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

5. Principles

5.1 Practical Advice

Appendix 1 contains information on the signs and symptoms of abuse/neglect including:

Abuse

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

Significant safeguarding issues

- Peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- Serious violence
- Honour based abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Mental health
- Preventing and detecting radicalisation in the UK
- Recognising extremism
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- County lines
- Domestic abuse
- Forced marriage
- Under-age marriage

5.2 How to report concerns, including names and points of contact

- All staff receive a copy of Keeping safe in Education part one in their induction pack. This must be read, signed and returned to the Head Teacher. At initial training, staff are shown how to access CPOMS reporting system. (**Appendix 3**)
- All staff have a basic awareness of the signs of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect. They also have awareness of CSE, FGM and radicalisation.
- The DSL's have responsibility for coordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies including the Newcastle Local Safeguarding

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Children Board (LSCB). Staff are required to report any concerns or suspicions to the DSL.

- If abuse is suspected the DSL, or Headteacher will refer to investigating agencies according to the procedures established by LSCB and Local Authority (LA). Further action taken will be according to their advice. All phone calls, correspondence and relevant actions will be recorded on the CPOMS system.
- The DSL will attend child protection reviews/conferences as deemed appropriate by the Senior Leadership Team.
- The school will ensure that the DSL's responsible for safeguarding will receive appropriate training and updates.
- Safeguarding records are confidential and will be kept securely locked (this has been online since 2017, however incidents involving staff are kept in hard copy). Staff report incidents online via CPOMS, these records are secure and can only be accessed by key staff who hold a Merilock key or secondary authentication. Any additional documents or handwritten documents, are uploaded to the document vault within the CPOMS system.
- A statement in the school prospectus will inform parents and carers about our Education services duties and responsibilities under the safeguarding procedures. The policy is made available to all parents in school via the website.
- Any allegation against a member of staff will be reported to the Headteacher who will report to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer), within Newcastle City Council.
- If an allegation concerns the Headteacher, then the Chief Executive of the Percy Hedley Foundation will be informed and will be responsible for following procedures. The Chair of Governors should also be informed.
- If an allegation concerns the Chief Executive, then the Chair of Trustees will be responsible for following procedures.

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Jonathon Jowett	Chair of Trustees	J.Jowett@percyhedley.org.uk

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. The School is clear about the need to record any concerns about a child or children and young people within our school, ensuring they are factually accurate.

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A file note will be made of any concern raised and action taken. Concerns must be logged on the CPOMS system and recorded under the correct heading. Any child protection concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL in person and later logged on the CPOMS system.

Any member of staff who has concerns with regard to a child will raise these with the DSL, this will then be discussed with the staff and DSL, and any appropriate action taken and documented. The DSL will make a phone referral to the relevant first response within the relevant local authority and follow this up with a written referral if required. Any further actions and interactions will be logged on the CPOMS system. All causes for concern, child protection concerns, incidents, accidents, bullying incidents, behaviour concerns, e safety incidents, home/school contact are reported on the CPOMS system. These are viewed as they are recorded by the DSL's. If a combination of incidents cause concern to the DSL they will make a referral. If the culmination of incidents suggests a family/child needs additional access to services, these will be assessed using the Thresholds for that Local authority and referred to the relevant service.

If a child transfers from the school, these files will be forwarded to the child's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's safeguarding named person. When a child leaves school (usually at age 18 years) a transfer to Adults Social Services will take place, and relevant information shared with appropriate personnel.

5.3 Dealing with disclosures

When a child/young person makes a disclosure it is essential that every member of staff (teaching and non-teaching) should know what action to take.

A child/young person has the right to be:

- Protected
- Listened to in private
- Believed
- Cared for
- Treated with discretion
- Helped to protect him/herself

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Staff responsibility in relation to the children/young people with whom you work and their potential abuse is

- To identify
- To respond
- To listen
- To believe
- To record
- To report immediately any unusual comment or occurrence
- To be discreet
- Not to investigate
- Not to ignore

You should realise that

- You cannot promise to keep the disclosure a secret
- False allegations of sexual abuse are rare
- It is inappropriate to inquire into details of the abuse. This should be left to an interviewer skilled in asking such questions. Ask a child/young person to repeat statements, do not ask questions.
- You should never stop a child/young person who is freely recalling significant events.

All staff are aware of the importance to report any suspicious injury or suspect dialogue, no matter how small, to the *designated member of staff*. It may be the final piece of jigsaw which can make some sense of the whole picture. Any actions, including when to contact the parents, will be taken after discussion with the DSL.

As part of the Education Services personal health and social development programmes, children and young people should be frequently reassured that they can trust and confide in you about any worries they may have. Always take time to listen when a child/young person wants to talk. All staff must *remember* not to promise confidentiality to keep the disclosure a secret.

When child abuse is suspected, it is essential to have a record of all the information available. Staff should note carefully what has been observed, when it was observed and record all factual information. Signs of physical injury should be described in detail and identified on the CPOMS body map.

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5.4 Responding to disclosure

- Listen carefully to what the child/young person is saying
- Take seriously with the child/young person is saying
- Write down as soon as possible what the child/young person said
- Tell your Designated person as soon as possible
- Make sure the child/young person is safe (ie. supported in school)
- Do not tell the child/young person it is not their fault
- Do not panic
- Do not immediately rush off to find someone else
- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Keep the child/young person informed of any action you are planning to take, where appropriate
- Do not make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser
- Do not ask detailed questions or press the child/young person for more information

Important points to remember

- Try not to display any signs of shock or disapproval when the child/young person is making a disclosure
- The child/young person may not regard the experience as either bad or painful, they may not feel guilty or angry
- Be aware of your own feelings which may be different from those of the child/young person
- Take care of yourself by making sure that you have an opportunity to discuss your feelings with someone at a later stage
- Do not destroy any evidence as it may be useful in a court of law
- Initial disclosure, even if retracted, still must be referred

Whistleblowing

Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy.

A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed

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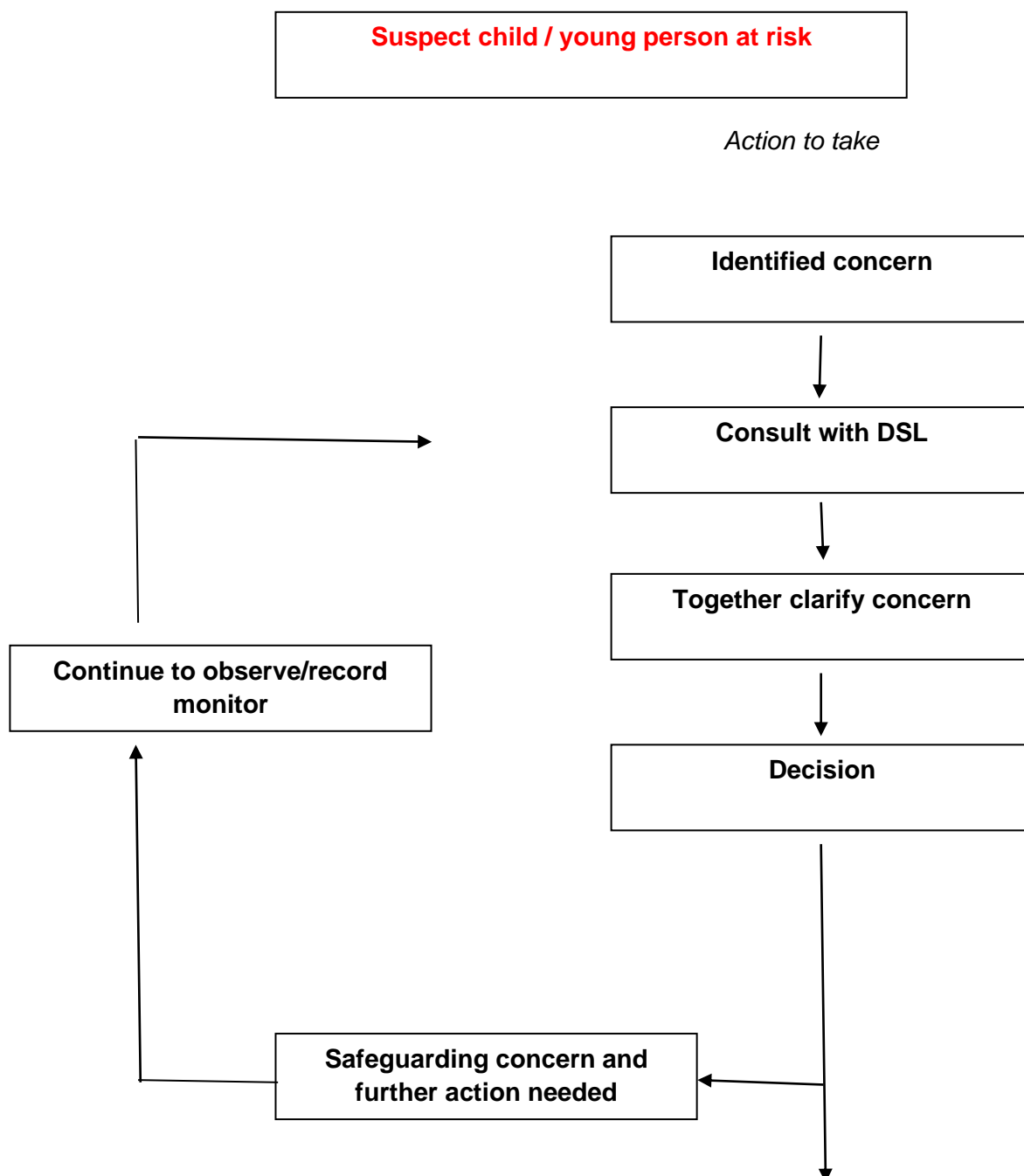
- an legal obligation has been breached
- there has been a miscarriage of justice
- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed.

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government, the number is 0808 800 5000.

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5.5 Referrals

Channels of communication should be quick and clear:



Designated Person to make a referral to relevant Children's Services Departments and to Newcastle Children's Safeguarding Board, followed by written referral.

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In relation to children and young people, Ofsted adopts the definition used in the Children Act 2004 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance document: *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2021* (paragraph 4), which defines safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare as:

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

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

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example creating / sharing nude or semi-nude images and accessing pornography
- teenage relationship abuse
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic violence
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children

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- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Serious violence
- Peer on peer abuse
- County lines

In addition to this all staff are Northern Counties School need to be aware of other factors that may impact on a child/young person's wellbeing. These include:

- children's and learners' health and safety and well-being, including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety and associated issues
- the use of physical intervention

5.6 Confidentiality

Staff have access to confidential information about children and in order to undertake day to day activities. In some circumstances staff will have access to very sensitive or private information. Information should never be used to embarrass or intimidate the child. The information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with anyone other than on a need to know basis. Staff are:

- Clear about what information can be shared and in what circumstances
- Treat all information in a discreet and confidential manner
- Seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about information sharing
- Be aware of who they report allegations or concerns to
- All information which is held electronically is subject to the Foundation's Data Protection Policy and is appropriately secured

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5.7 Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff

When dealing with situations where members of staff face allegations of physical and/or sexual abuse, it is imperative that everyone maintains an open and inquiring mind. An over-hasty or ill-judged decision to suspend a member of staff can have a substantial detrimental effect on their career and also be distressing to the child or young person concerned, who may feel responsible.

It is important to consider whether the member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child or young person.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person
- Behaved towards a child/children or young person/s in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children or young people.

There should be immediate consideration of whether the child/young person or children/young people are at risk of significant harm and in need of protection. If so, the Headteacher, or DSL should contact the Newcastle Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

Immediate consideration should be given to medical assistance and seeking medical evidence.

Children and young people must be listened to and heard and on no account should suggestions be made to them as to alternative explanations.

A staff member receiving an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report it immediately to the Headteacher or DSL. This information would be recorded on the Northern Counties Foundation electronic Safeguarding Log and within CPOMS.

The Headteacher should initiate an urgent initial assessment of whether or not there is substance to the allegation. The Headteacher is not expected to investigate the allegation itself or interview children and young people but assess whether the allegation needs further investigation by the appropriate agency on advice from the LADO.

The Headteacher should obtain details in writing signed and dated by the person or persons making the allegation.

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Where the Headteacher believes further investigation is warranted, he or she should either refer the matter to the investigating agencies according to procedures established by the LSCB and the LA, or where satisfied the child or children and young people is/are not at risk or that a reportable criminal offence has not been committed, undertake further investigations at school or college level, inform the child / young person or children / young people or parents, the staff member and chair of governors.

The police may wish to interview the member of staff before any approach is made by the Headteacher and should be given every assistance.

The Headteacher should not automatically suspend and should consult with the Chief executive and HR and the LADO before any decision is taken.

Suspension should occur where allegations are so serious that dismissal for gross misconduct is possible, where it is necessary for the investigation to proceed unimpeded and where children and young people are at risk.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- Substantiated: There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.
- False: There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- Unsubstantiated: There is not sufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

The member of staff should be informed that suspension might occur. He or she should be advised to seek the advice and assistance of their relevant professional organisation.

There are three possible routes for investigation: the police, local safeguarding and professional disciplinary procedures.

Any investigation by the police or safeguarding agencies will take priority over an internal investigation by the school or college.

An internal investigation should be held in abeyance pending the outcome.

If the outcome is a disciplinary charge further action should be in accordance with the Percy Hedley Foundation's disciplinary procedures.

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Where it is decided no further action is necessary, a suspension should be lifted immediately and the Headteacher should meet the member of staff to discuss his/her return to work. Other than in the event of dismissal the Headteacher should offer support and/or counselling to help rebuild a member of staff's confidence.

Support and/or counselling should also be offered to the child or children and young people.

A copy of the statement or the record of it should be kept on the child's personal timeline CPOMS, not open to disclosure, together with a written record of the outcome. The Percy Hedley Foundation electronic Safeguarding Log will be completed by the Headteacher.

5.8 Procedures for dealing with safeguarding allegations about another pupil

Staff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and creating / sending nude or semi-nude images.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

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

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student

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- indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

At Northern Counties School we will support the victims of peer on peer abuse by ensuring they are seen by the school's wellbeing team and referred to any other service as deemed suitable. Any organisational changes that need to be taken into account to protect the child (including protecting their wellbeing) will be put into place.

5.9 Sharing nude or semi-nude images (previously known as sexting)

KCSIE 2021 Part 5 and the separate guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

- In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020)

5.10 Contextual Safeguarding

Northern Counties School draws its pupils from 14 different local authorities, most of which are based around the Tyne and Tees valleys. The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when consider the well-being and safety of its pupils. This includes considering the home and child's local area, their family and social connections as well as how they travel to school and other venues and places they may visit as part of their home and school lives.

5.11 Safer recruitment procedures

- On receipt of application
 - Check for any gaps in employment
 - Check for criminal convictions
 - Flag any gaps or convictions on the checklist for querying at interview
- Once shortlisted and candidate has accepted invitation to interview
 - Start reference process
 - Send candidate online DBS link and list of acceptable ID documentation
- At interview
 - Check ID and take relevant DBS ID

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- Query any gaps in employment
- Take copies of relevant certificates
- Successful candidate
 - Process online DBS, Barred list also checked at DBS stage
 - Check Prohibition list Teachers with and without QTS
 - Check Prohibition list for non EEA teachers
 - Check Section 128 for all leadership positions
 - Carry out telephone verification of references
 - Arrange start date after original DBS certificate has been seen and checked
- Upon employment
 - Safeguarding training
 - Ensure employee reads and understands the current version of 'Keeping children safe in education' document and signs acknowledgement form which includes option to log/note any points needing clarification

5.12 Disclosure and Barring Service checks

All staff are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring service Check (DBS), which has replaced the police records search, prior to taking up their appointment, and to sign a declaration regarding convictions relating to the harm of children and young people during the application process. Staff who deliberately seek to mislead the school in respect of this will be subject to dismissal. In addition to this all staff are checked against the Prohibition list, teachers are checked under Section 128 and managers are checked against the barred from managing schools list. Staff from overseas are also checked against the EEA guidance and all therapists are checked against the HCPC register.

5.13 Whistle-blowing

Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy.

A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a legal obligation has been breached

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- there has been a miscarriage of justice
- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed.

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the Home Office, the number is 0808 800 5000.

All staff adhere to the staff code of conduct (Appendix 2)

6. Monitoring and Compliance

Overall responsibility for the operation of the procedure lies with the Chief Executive, supported by Heads of Education Services.

This policy will be reviewed 6 monthly basis and updated accordingly. It is the responsibility of the Heads of Education to implement and ensure compliance with this policy and the responsibility of all members of the educational community adheres to this policy.

7. Associated Policies & References

Foundation Data Protection Policy

Foundation Confidentiality Statement

Foundation Code of Conduct Policy

Education E-Safety and Acceptable Usage Policy

Education Safeguarding Child Friendly Version

Education Sex and Relationships Policy

Whistle Blowing Policy

Child Missing Education Policy

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Appendix 1 - Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect

Keeping Children and Young Adults Safe in Education (September 2021)

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. 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.

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

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.

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

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commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (see paragraph 29).

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 care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and producing nude or semi-nude images (previously known as sexting) put children in danger. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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.

Peer on peer abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse).

This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);

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- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- the production of nude and semi-nude images (sexting) and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

Honour-based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

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Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure (unlike in the medical profession where an observation may have been made).

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Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out; and discuss any such cases with the safeguarding lead and children's social care. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases.

Mental Health

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.

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.

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.

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.

Preventing and Detecting Radicalisation in the UK

Northern Counties School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. As a school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability. All staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The School recognises we need to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.

Wherever necessary, we aim to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.

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- Prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support
- Work with multi agency teams appropriately if there are risks of radicalisation.

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour

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- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

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Potential vulnerabilities include:

Due to the nature of some children and young people's difficulties they are particularly vulnerable to abuse, particularly their difficulties with communication, learning and physical difficulties. Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

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Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

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People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

(The definition can be found here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Forced Marriage

We do not support the idea of forcing someone to marry without their consent.

Staff must contact the DSL if they are aware of any concerns. These will be passed on to the relevant children's or adult social care department.

Under-age Marriage

In England a young person cannot legally marry until they are 16 years old (without consent of parents/carers) or have a sexual relationship

Any concerns should be referred to the DSL

Children Missing Education

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) the school has:

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1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
 - a. leave school to be home educated
 - b. move away from the school's location
 - c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
 - e. are permanently excluded

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

All children and young people at Northern Counties have SEND. Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

At Northern Counties School we focus on providing pastoral support and attention for all our children and young people, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place, for example, British Sign Language and the use of

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alternative and augmented communication systems including voice output communication aids (VOCA's) and picture exchange communication systems (PECS).

Private fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Low level concerns about staff behaviour

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

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Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Low level concerns about staff behaviour

Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors.

At Northern Counties School we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the headteacher should go to the CEO and Chair of Governors who can be contacted by email and telephone.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the headteacher.

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Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a 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.

The headteacher has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).

Allegations

It is an allegation if the person* has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

Online safety (E-safety)

There is greater detail within the E-safety policy which should be read in conjunction with this guidance.

The E-safety policy refers to the '4Cs' (Content/Contact/Conduct/Commerce). Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college, could sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

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At Northern Counties School we manage this risk by ensuring that when children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems.

However, many pupils are able to access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, mobile phone use is restricted in school: pupils may use their mobiles as part of planned lessons and then they are stored away. Staff must only use Foundation mobiles whilst in work, unless they have the express permission of the Head Teacher, who will authorise the use of personal mobiles in extreme circumstances only.

When accessing online learning outside of school, children are given access to appropriate, secure online learning platforms. Children are supervised by their parents/carers and contact with school staff is governed by school guidance. All staff to pupil contact is logged on CPOMS.

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Appendix 2 - Staff Code of Conduct

Positions of trust

As a result of the knowledge, position and authority of their role, all adults working with children are in a position of trust in relation to the people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a child cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others and record any incident with this potential. Where a vulnerable person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child or vulnerable adult it is an offence to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child or vulnerable adult or to cause or incite that person to engage in or watch sexual activity.

Propriety and behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare of people in their care. The school recognises the value and benefits of having staff and others representing the school at a range of functions, events and levels including:

- Courses and conferences
- Meetings
- Boards and other bodies
- Educational and other visits
- Sporting events
- Fundraising and other events

Staff will be deemed to be representing the school if any or all of the costs of attending or time for attending has been provided through the school.

Representing the school at any function, event or level must always be authorised by the appropriate line manager and representation should be regarded as a privilege. All expenses claimed in relation to representation must be done so in line with the Foundation's policy and practice in this area.

The following, non- exhaustive, list of action may breach the above and have the effect of bringing the organisation into disrepute:

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- Behaving in an offensive and/or inappropriate manner
- Expressing views publicly which would not be compatible with the aims and values of the school
- Failing to maintain the high standards of behaviour expected

Failure to represent the school positively may result in the termination of the privilege of representation or disciplinary action. Bringing the organisation into disrepute is a disciplinary matter.

When attending an event and being in a position of responsibility for children and vulnerable adults, staff must ensure that the care and welfare of the children and vulnerable adults is their prime role and must be able at any time, day or night, to carry out those duties effectively.

The professional bodies of any staff will also have a code of professional conduct that must be respected and considered at all times.

Low-level concerns about staff behaviour

Staff should behave in a professional way at all times. Concerns may be graded low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- having their mobile phone on their person without prior agreement from the Head Teacher;
- taking photographs of children on their own mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

‘Harm’ test for adults working with children in schools

Staff should safeguard children in all areas of their lives. Appropriate action (KCSIE 2021 Part 4) will be taken where staff have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;

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- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Dress and appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, it is important that staff consider the manner of their dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role which may be different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure that they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Gifts

Staff need to be aware that they should not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by other or lead the giver to have or expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when families, children and vulnerable adults wish to pass on small token of appreciation to staff (for example, a Christmas gift or a thank you gift) and this is acceptable. However it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of a significant value. All gifts should be logged in the gift log book. Similarly it is inadvisable to give personal gifts to children and vulnerable adults. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture or bribe or to single out that person and may be perceived that a "favour" of some kind is expected in return. All gifts received should be recorded in the gifts and hospitality book. Any reward given to children or vulnerable adults should be within the agreed guidance, consistent with the behaviour policy and recorded.

Infatuations

It is possible for children or young people to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and develop an infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively maintain the dignity of all concerned. If a member of staff is aware of a child or vulnerable adult becoming infatuated with him/herself or a colleague, this should be discussed with a Senior Manager and appropriate action taken, to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

Social contact

Staff should not seek personal friendship or social contact with children or vulnerable adults to secure a relationship. It is important that the staff member exercises their professional judgement if a child or young person seeks this contact and makes a response so that there can be no misinterpretation of intent. Staff should not give

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their personal details such as home/mobile numbers, home or email address to children or vulnerable adults unless agreed with Senior managers.

Physical contact

See also intimate care policy

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with the people in their care however it is important that they only do so in ways that are appropriate to their professional role.

Physical contact should be made in response to a child or young person's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, development, gender, ethnicity and background. Staff need to be aware that well intended contact may be misconstrued by the child or by an observer or by anyone to whom the action is described. Staff should never touch in a way which may be considered indecent. They should always be prepared to explain their actions and accept that any physical contact is open to scrutiny. Staff should never indulge in horse play, tickling or fun fights.

All physical contacts must never be secretive or for the gratification of the adult. If a member of staff believes that an action has been misconstrued, they should report this immediately to a Senior manager.

There may be occasions where the child or vulnerable adult needs comfort in times of distress. Staff should consider the way this is offered, always tell a colleague when and how this comfort was given and record the situation. Extra caution will always be required if a child or vulnerable adult has been a subject of previous abuse.

Any sexualised behaviour by a member of staff towards a child or young person is inappropriate and illegal. The sexualised behaviour includes engaging children in watching sexual activity or pornographic material, as well as physical contact and penetrative and non-penetrative acts. This means that adults should never pursue sexual relationships with children or vulnerable adults in or out of the Northern Counties School, and any form of communication with a child or vulnerable adult which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative.

Staff should be aware that conferring special attention on one child or vulnerable adult may be construed as "grooming" and this is a criminal offence.

Sports activities, showers and changing areas

Physical contact will be required at times to perform a task or solely to demonstrate a task and this is acceptable. The child or young person should be informed of how

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this assistance is going to be given. Supervision of children and young people in showers and changing rooms must be appropriate to the age and gender of the person and sensitive to the dignity and privacy they are entitled to.

Staff should avoid unnecessary physical contact with children or young people in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour, announcing their entry to the changing room. Staff should not change in the same place as the children or vulnerable adult or shower with them.

One to one situations

Staff sometimes need to work one to one with a child or young person. Staff should recognise their vulnerability in these situations and plan accordingly to ensure their safety and that of the person in their care. Staff should tell others where they are taking the child or vulnerable adult and if possible leave the door to the room open. Risk assessment may need to be carried out for these situations.

Personalised care

All people who use the services of the Northern Counties Foundation receive care, treatment and support from all staff who are committed to maximising people's choice, control and inclusion and protection of their human rights as important ways of meeting their individual needs and reducing the potential for abuse.

Children and vulnerable adults who use services have access to appropriate information about what abuse is how to recognise the signs, what they should do if they or another person is being abused or suspect abuse, including relevant contact details under the safeguarding procedures. They should also know what they might expect to happen when a referral is made under the local safeguarding procedures. This is promoted through relevant curriculum and through information brochures and training.

Students / Work experience

We will ensure that people who use Northern Counties Services benefit from staff (including volunteers, students, temporary and ancillary staff and practitioners working under practising privileges) who:

- Are honest, reliable, trustworthy and treat the people who use the service with respect
- Are competent to carry out their role and meet the needs of the people who use the services

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- Have been subject to the necessary checks, so that the Foundation is assured that the worker is suitable for their role
- An appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff is appointed to supervise them
- Wherever it is possible, this supervisor is on duty at the same time as the new worker, or is available to be consulted
- New workers do not escort people away from the premises unless accompanied by a staff member for whom a full and satisfactory DBS check has been received

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Appendix 3 - Use of CPOMS

CPOMS is a reporting system which is used in school to support pupil safeguarding and wellbeing. It creates a timeline of information which supports school to support pupils.

**CPOMS can be found at
northerncounties.cpoms.net**

All staff need to create their own password at initial log in with their email address.

CPOMS incidents are automatically flagged to members of the senior leadership team and designated safeguarding leads. Certain categories are highlighted to other staff e.g. medical (nurses), wellbeing (wellbeing team). Senior leaders will add an action- if this action needs to be taken by the staff member, they will alert the staff member to this via CPOMS. If it is a behaviour incident/accident/near miss this will be logged by senior leaders on a spreadsheet, with the action and any other details to enable us to identify trends.

There are a number of categories on CPOMS. Some categories open out into sub sections such as Safeguarding and Bullying. When reporting an incident on CPOMS it is important that you pick the correct category. If you pick accident, behaviour incident or near miss, there is a specific format which must be followed.

Any relevant email contact with parents which help to create the bigger picture should be logged on CPOMS.

Any telephone contact with parents which help to create the bigger picture should be logged on CPOMS.

All care team meeting minutes/ LAC minutes should be uploaded on CPOMS via the document vault.

All other appropriate files should be attached to the CPOMS logs – this may include NAPPI forms, seclusion forms, de-briefs, photos, chronologies or pupil think sheets.

All concerns to be logged on CPOMS. If it is a child protection concern you must also see a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If there is an injury to the child via accident/ other concerns, please use the body map.

When logging an accident/ near miss you must include:

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1. Date and time of accident
2. Place of accident
3. Details of accident
4. Details of injury
5. Treatment given
6. Witnesses

Senior leaders will investigate and log:

1. Is accident reportable to OFSTED or RIDDOR?
2. Was the person authorised to be there?
3. Were they properly trained to be there?
4. What action has been taken to prevent recurrence?
5. Recommended action to HS manager?

When logging a behavioural incident you must include:

1. Antecedents (Describe the events leading up to the incident/behaviour- see Behaviour scale)
2. Incident description (see behaviour scale)
3. Nature and duration of physical intervention used
4. Pupil response to the intervention
5. Details of any resulting harm (pupil/staff/property)
6. Outcomes (what can be learnt from the incident)
7. Pupil debrief (how do they feel about the incident?)
8. Parent informed (parents must be informed that day if intervention was used)

There are a range of 'How to...' guides within the CPOMS library. Each includes guidance and a cut and paste text that is used to ensure that no important information is omitted.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person, you must report this to:

Jo Allen, Barry Reed, Ros Field – DSLs

Michele McCafferty, Lauren Stephenson – Deputy DSLs

If you are having difficulties logging onto CPOMS see Ros Field.

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