

Grace Academy Solihull

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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1. Policy

Grace Academy (“the Academy”) fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the Academy and will be reviewed annually. All organisations and providers who use our premises need to be fully aware of our policy and have appropriate child protection policies and procedures which are compatible with ours.

Wherever the word staff is used, it covers all staff on site, including supply and self-employed staff, contractors, governors and volunteers. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is everyone’s responsibility and to ensure part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2023) is read and clearly understood.

The Governors recognise their statutory responsibility to make sure that appropriate arrangements are in place to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm and to always act in the best interests of the child. To safeguard and promote the welfare of children: Section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Academy will ensure the student’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining appropriate action to take and what services to provide. The Academy will put in place systems which will allow students to express their views and give feedback: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

There are six main elements to our policy:

- i. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- ii. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- iii. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- iv. Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan.
- v. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- vi. Working effectively with a range of agencies to support the child.

This policy is read in conjunction with the other Grace Academy Solihull policies.

We recognise that because of day to day contact with children, the Academy is well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The Academy recognises its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care by establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. The policy applies to all children whose care and education comes within the remit of this Academy.

Grace Academy has other policies that may be connected to specific aspects within this policy and should therefore be considered. This includes, although is not limited to, the Safeguarding Policy and Drugs and Education Policy, Attendance and Children Missing in Education Policy.

The Academy will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the Academy whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the Values curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Provide appropriate levels of child protection training for all staff.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE):

- Ensure we have designated senior staff for child protection who have received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff, volunteers and the Governing Body) knows the name of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers, organisations and providers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the Academy and staff for child protection, by setting out obligations in prospectuses. Also, ensuring that a copy of the Child Protection policy is readily available for all staff, visitors etc. at all times.
- Notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Maintain a team of staff who are fully trained in Local Authority procedures.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and separate from the main student file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

The Academy recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. As a result, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

We, the Academy, will do our very best to support the student through:

- The Academy ethos, aims and goals, which promote a positive, supportive and secure environment and give students a sense of being valued.
- The Academy Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students. Students will be taught that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that when a student on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. Records are kept until the child on the register is 25 as there may be other family members who follow who may also then be at risk. Records are then destroyed.
- The content of a rich curriculum which is designed to raise aspiration and self-esteem.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by:

- a) Children's Acts 1989 and 2004;
- b) Education Act 2002;
- c) Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018;
- d) Governance Handbook;
- e) Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022);
- f) Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003;
- g) Statutory Guidance on the Prevent Duty 2015;
- h) Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021;
- i) Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges 2021
- j) DfE Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance 2021
- k) What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners.

Child Protection and Safeguarding policies reflect the Academy's understanding of their obligation under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Act Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. (KCSIE 2023).

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, might breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and circumstances. (For Further information see Human Rights/Equality and Human Rights Commission(equalityhumanrights.com)).

1.1 The Designated Member of Staff for Child Protection

The Designated Member of Staff for Child Protection is a member of the Academy Leadership; Dawn Russell (DSL), Rachael Wright (Deputy DSL), Stephanie Mackiewicz (Deputy DSL). This person has Designated Child Protection Lead responsibility and is known as the (DSL) Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All staff know who the Designated Member of Staff is and that they are aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to discuss any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The governors support the designated member of staff for Child Protection in carrying out her responsibility as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) with reference to safer recruitment. Annex 1 sets out essential contacts for each Academy.

The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies will work with other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#); [NPCC- When to call the police](#).

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of the barriers they may face.

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

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

1.2 Responding

Any member of staff who has concerns about a child must report their concerns to Dawn Russell (GAS), or to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, being Rachel Wright, Stephanie Mackevic, or to any member of the Safeguarding team or the Academy Leadership Team in their absence.

Guidance is given by the local authority relevant to the Academy.

If the suspicions in any way involve another member of staff, the matter needs to be brought to the attention of the Principal who will act in accordance with procedures by discussing the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

1.3 Abuse of Trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 established a criminal offence of the abuse of trust affecting teachers and others who are in a relationship of trust with 16-18 year olds; a relationship of trust being one where a

teacher, member of education staff or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken.

The legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

The principle of equality embedded in the legislation applies irrespective of sexual orientation; neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

1.4 E-Safety

Most of our students will use mobile phones and computers some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face to face meetings. The Academy's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep students safe in the Academy. Cyber bullying by students, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and students are not allowed to access these sites in the Academy.

All members of staff are trained in e-safety. Further information is set out in the academy Digital & E-Safety policy and staff will be signposted to KCSIE 2022: Online Safety, pages 32-33; p123-130.

1.5 Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour), writing down as exactly as possible and using the child's own words what was said or seen. It is the student's perspective that should be recorded, giving the time and location. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made. All records must be signed and dated clearly.

Electronic safeguarding programmes such as CPOMS should be updated and all information completed in full.

All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) will be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for safekeeping. This includes case conference minutes and written records of any concerns. Access to any records will be on a 'need to know' basis. All records must be securely held, separate from the main student file, and in a secure cabinet until the child's 25th Birthday. The DSL shall ensure that indication of the existence of the additional file is marked on the student's record.

When a child who has a Child Protection Plan leaves the Academy and/or transfers to another school the DSL will inform the child's new school immediately and discuss with the child's social worker the transfer of any confidential information the Academy may hold.

When students who have been the subject of some concern in The Academy transfer from primary to secondary school and/or move school part way through an academic year, any concerns that are being monitored need to be passed on to the DSL of the receiving school in writing. Any other historic

information that is not part of either an on-going child protection case or an active monitoring situation should be shredded.

1.6 Supporting the Student

The Academy will support students in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection Plan.

The Academy will notify any concerns about a child who has a Child Protection Plan or is known to have an allocated social worker to the child's social worker or in her/his absence of the manager or a duty officer in the team.

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may experience difficulties which impact on their sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at the Academy their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The Academy will endeavour to support the student through the content of the curriculum and the Academy ethos of valuing the student.

Peer on peer abuse may take place and therefore section 2 of this policy must be considered in the same way for peer on peer as it would for adult to child. Abuse is not tolerated or passed off as part of growing up or banter between students.

We recognise that some students with added SEND and/or medical conditions may be particularly vulnerable in terms of safeguarding. The Academy will ensure that systems are in place so all students can access support and guidance.

1.6.1 Children missing in education

The Academy recognises that students missing education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

The Academy will ensure that protocols are in place to identify problems early and support will be given to the student and families in line with the Academy's policy for Attendance. Where a student is already known to the local authority children's social care (such as child in need plan or child protection plan or as a looked after child), it is recognised that going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

The Academy will work with other agencies to monitor and track non-attendance in line with the Academy policy for Attendance.

1.7 The Curriculum

Through various aspects of the curriculum, staff will raise students' awareness and build their confidence so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others, recognizing that students need opportunities to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.

The principles embedded in this policy link into other policies relating to: Health, PSHE, RE, Sex Education, Bullying, Equal Opportunities, and Additional Education Needs.

1.8 Training

The Academy is committed to supporting and training all staff in matters of child protection.

The governors will ensure that all staff receive child protection awareness training (level 1) as part of their induction. Training will be regularly updated as required, but at least annually.

The governors will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Member of Staff for Child Protection attends the multi-agency child protection training organised through the relevant Local Authority as soon as possible after taking up their responsibilities and that DSL subsequently receives appropriate training on a two yearly basis in accordance with government guidance. The DSL's who are involved in recruitment and at least one member of any governing body in the Academies will also complete safer recruitment training.

Whilst considering the above training requirements, governors and the Principal will have regard to the Teachers' Standards 26 which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment, and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with mental health needs.

1.9 Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Good practice guidance as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) and in the Grace Safer Recruitment Policy.

The Academy will ensure that safe recruitment practices are in place and follow in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work with children.

Staff are also made aware of Academy guidance for their own use of mobile technology and have discussed Safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated notes as set out in the Digital Policy.

2. Policy into Practice

2.1 Summary

The welfare of the children is of paramount importance at all times and the Academy has a responsibility and role to play in this area to always act in the best interests of the child. The Academy and all staff will promote the child's welfare. The staff of the Academy will work with all other appropriate agencies so that the protection offered to children is effective.

The procedures to be followed in The Academy are in line with those of the LSCP for dealing with child abuse as set out in the LSCP Handbook on Working Together for the Protection of Children from Abuse.

All Academy staff need to be vigilant for outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. The Academy seeks to play a part in the prevention of child abuse through the curriculum and courses such as personal, social and religious education which can help pupil to develop realistic attitudes towards the responsibilities of adult life, including parenthood.

On occasions parents/carers may appear to be supportive throughout actioning changes. This is known as disguised compliance, aggressive, deflection, accusatory, may be exhibited behaviour.

Students with SEN and disabilities are more likely to be abused or neglected, the SENCO's are therefore to be trained to at least Level 2 Safeguarding so that they are part of the team that seeks to keep these particular students safe.

All staff must be aware of the appropriate procedures to follow in respect of child protection and to that end, copies of 'Child Protection Policy and Procedures' are:

- **1 copy in the staffroom**
- **1 copy with administration staff**
- **1 copy with Academy Leadership Team**
- **1 copy with named Child Protection Officer**
- **1 copy for Facilities**
- **Electronic Copy on Google Drive to be found under the heading 'Safeguarding'**

Further government advice can be found at www.gov.uk, entitled 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners'.

2.2 Staff in Academy

In the event of any suspicion, within 20 minutes the following procedure should be followed by all Teaching and non-teaching staff:

If you are made aware that a child:

- (a) Is being abused or neglected
- (b) Is at risk from abuse
- (c) Maybe being abused
- (d) Maybe at risk from abuse

Immediately advise the Academy's designated safeguarding lead or appropriate member(s) of staff as set out at 1.1

Any discussions with the child should, so far as possible adhere to the following basic principles:

- Listen to the child, rather than directly question him or her
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant incidents
- Make notes of the discussion. (use the child's words and avoid translating into adult language), taking care to record the timing, setting and persons present
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of the substantive interview
- Never promise the child that the allegation will not be passed on to the DSL

NB: The child will not be 'snatched' from home on your information alone. The Principal/designated safeguarding member of staff will start off a series of processes that are designed to ensure that proper collaboration takes place between the appropriate Academy staff and professionals from other agencies.

Whistleblowing

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with Grace Academy or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed other whistleblowing channels may be open to them on 0800 028 0285 – NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline.

2.3 Significant Harm and Recognition of Abuse

The Children Act of 1989 introduced the concept of 'SIGNIFICANT HARM' as a threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the interests of the children.

There are no absolute criteria to judge this concept. However, it can be described as the detrimental outcome of various forms of child maltreatment to the child's well-being.

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

The local authority should make a decision, within one working day of a referral being made, about what course of action it is taking and should let the referrer know the outcome.

Staff should follow up on a referral should this information not be forthcoming.

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person who made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

Harm means ILL TREATMENT or the impairment of HEALTH OR DEVELOPMENT.

- DEVELOPMENT means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;
- ILL-TREATMENT includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical;
- HEALTH – includes physical or mental health

All forms of harm can be translated to online abuse.

Abuse or neglect is not always easily identified.

The first indications that a child is being abused may not necessarily be the presence of severe injury.

Indicators can present in numerous ways:

- By remarks made by the Child or his/her parents or friends
- By changes in a child's behaviour or demeanour which may indicate abuse;

- By indications that the family is under extreme stress;
- By a series of events, which whilst not necessarily of concern in themselves, are significant if viewed in their entirety.

Initially the situation may not seem serious, but prompt help to the family might prevent minor abuse escalating into something more serious.

2.4 Categories of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. This may be by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused:

- In a family;
- In a community;
- By those known to them;
- By adult(s);
- By another child(ren).

The Department of Health defines four categories of child abuse, which are assumed to be forms of 'Significant Harm':

- **ABUSE**

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

- **NEGLECT**

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

- **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and fabricated or induced illness.

- **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment or rejection. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Someone 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 institution or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger.

FAILURE TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION CAN HAVE SERIOUS OR EVEN FATAL CONSEQUENCES

REMEMBER: THE CHILD MAY NOT ASK AGAIN FOR HELP AND IF YOU DON'T ACT, ALL HOPE MAY BE LOST.

2.4.1 Neglect

Includes poor physical care and inattention to the child's basic needs e.g. regular feeding, cleanliness and clothing, And

Failure to provide the necessary stimulation to sustain behavioural and emotional development.

Warning signs include:

- Failure to thrive – where there is poor growth for which no medical case is found
- A consistently unkempt, dirty appearance
- Current medical needs; e.g. failure to seek medical advice or attend appointments for illness, missed immunisations etc.
- Development delay without any other clear cause
- Lack of social responsiveness
- Self-stimulating behaviours such as head banging or rocking. (Some special needs children may exhibit this behaviour, due to their disability, but this also should be evaluated for context)
- Repeated failure by parents/carers to prevent injury
- Regularly inappropriate clothing for the weather
- Hazardous living conditions

2.4.2 Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, scolding, suffocating or poisoning and may cause the following injuries:

Bruises

- To eyes
- In or around the mouth
- Grasp marks on legs and arms – or chest of a small child
- Finger marks e.g. on one side of the face or the other
- Symmetrical bruising (especially on the ears)
- Behind the ears
- Outlining bruising (belt marks, hand prints)
- Linear bruising (particularly on the buttocks or back)
- On soft tissue with no obvious explanation e.g. inner aspect of thigh 🎬

The following are uncommon sites for accidental bruising:

- Back of legs, buttocks
- Mouth, cheeks, behind the ears
- Stomach, chest
- Under the arm
- Genital, rectal area
- Neck

Scars

Children may have scars, but notice should be taken of a large number of differing age scars (especially if coupled with current bruising), unusual shaped scars (round ones from possible cigarette burns), or lacerations that did not receive medical treatment.

Fractures

These should be suspected if there is pain, swelling and discoloration over a bone or joint. Fractures should be suspected if a child is not using a limb. The most common non-accidental fractures are to the long bones in the arms and legs and to the ribs.

Burns/scalds

It is very difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns; however, burns or scalds with clear outlines are suspicious as are burns of uniform depth over a larger area.

Bites

These can leave clear impressions of teeth; as human bites are oval or crescent shaped. If the impression of the bites is more than three cm across its width, an adult or older child with permanent teeth must have caused them.

Other injuries which may be deliberately caused:

- Poisoning
- Ingestion or other application of damaging substances e.g. bleach
- Administration of Drugs to children where they are not medically indicated or prescribed
- Female Genital Mutilation – includes female circumcision, excision and infibulations: It is physical abuse and an offence regardless of cultural or other reasons.

Injuries may also be caused as a result of parent fabrication or induced illness in a child.

2.4.3 Female Genital Mutilation

In some cultures, it may be important that women undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) before being able to marry – usually this will be performed during childhood but there are reports of young girls or young women undergoing FGM just before a forced marriage. FGM has been illegal in the UK since 1985, the 1985 Act has subsequently been amended by the FGM Act 2003, and it is also a criminal offence to take someone overseas for the purpose of FGM. The Academy now has a legal duty to notify the police since 31st October 2015. If a teacher in the course of their work in the profession discovers that an act of FGM appears to have

been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher **must** report this to the police. They should also report this to the DSL. Further information on child sexual exploitation is set out in Annex A KCSIE 2023.

Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a **specific legal duty on teachers**. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. See Annex B of KCSIE 2023.

The 'One Chance' Rule

All staff working with victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence need to be aware of the 'one chance' rule. That is, they may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus they may only have one chance to save a life. This means that all staff need to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations if they come across forced marriage cases. If the victim is allowed to walk out of the door without support being offered, that one chance might be wasted.

Signs to be aware of:

- Absence and persistent absence
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility
- Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Sudden announcement of engagement to stranger
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education
- Anxious, depressed, emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem

These warning signs may indicate many issues and are not necessarily on their own indicators of such issues but neither should they be ignored. The list is not exhaustive but an indication.

Family History:

- Siblings forced to marry
- Early marriage of siblings
- Self-harm or suicide of siblings
- Death of a parent
- Family disputes
- Running away from home
- Unreasonable restrictions e.g. kept at home by parents ('house arrest') and financial restrictions

2.4.4 Honour-based violence

The terms 'honour-crime' or 'honour-based violence' or 'izzat' embrace a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women) including assault, imprisonment and murder, where the person is being punished by their family or their community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In transgressing this correct code of behaviour, this person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the 'shame' or 'dishonour' of the family.

Ignoring these issues is not an option. You should report any concerns immediately to the safeguarding lead or their deputy without discussing it with anyone else.

2.4.5 Sexual Abuse (including sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexting)

Both male and female children can be sexually abused by adults or other children. These activities are usually kept very secret and are damaging to children both in the short and long term. Sexual abuse can occur without any physical contact, as abuse can mean being forced to watch sexual activity.

Children may also be made to take part in prostitution or pornographic activity.

Most child victims are sexually abused by someone they know – either a member of their family or someone well known to them or their family. The children are likely to have been put under considerable pressure not to reveal what has been happening. The abuse may carry on for many years before it comes to light. It is important to note that children/young people are also capable of sexually abusive behaviour.

Sexual abuse often presents itself in a veiled way; recognition of sexual abuse generally follows either a direct statement from the child (or very occasionally from the abuser), or more often suspicion based on the child's circumstances, behaviour, or physical symptoms or signs. Although not exhaustive, these physical signs should alert professionals of the possibility of abuse – several features may be present. Physical manifestations

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy (especially in younger girls or when the identity of the father is uncertain)
- Genital lacerations or bruising
- Vaginal bleeding in pre-pubescent girls
- Abnormal dilation of vagina, anus or urethra Additional physical signs
- Itching, redness, soreness
- Unexpected bleeding from the vagina or anus
- Daytime wetting
- Faecal soiling or retention

Emotional and behavioural manifestations

- Behaviour with sexual overtones (depending on age and understanding)
- Explicit or frequent sexual preoccupation in talk and play
- Sexual relationships with adults or other children
- Hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words, play or drawings Children may also behave in the following ways:
- Withdrawn, tearful or aggressive behaviour to peers or adults
- Running away from home
- Suicide attempts and self-mutilation

- Child Psychiatric problems, including behaviour problems, withdrawal from social contact, onset of wetting or soiling when previously dry and clean, severe sleep disturbances, arson
- Learning problems which do not match intellectual ability, or poor concentration (for some sexually abused children, school may be a haven – they will arrive early, are reluctant to leave and perform well)
- Marked reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for PE

2.4.6 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

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

The new working together advice on CSE and the new definition can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

A progress report detailing the Govt's work in this area along with forward commitment can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-progress-report>

2.4.7 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation is sometimes known as County Lines. CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial or other advantage to the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or 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 technology.

Some examples of CCE could include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines); forced to shoplift or pickpocket or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include (but this is not a definitive list):

- 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 wellbeing
- children who misuse drugs and/or alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- children who regularly miss school or education, or do not take part in education.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) should be considered alongside a safeguarding referral and other local services available. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age 18
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults;
- CCE is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age might be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status to economic resources.

2.4.8 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse describes sustained and repeated responses to the child or the child's behaviour which are so negative, inconsistent, rejecting or inappropriate that the child shows serious difficulties in emotional, social or behavioural development. What makes the parental behaviour abusive is that it typifies their relationship with the child. It is thus not usually indicated by a specific incident, but is observed in the interaction with the child. One child may be a scapegoat or treated completely differently from their siblings.

Parental behaviours associated with emotional abuse:

The following may identify parental behaviours which, if persistent, may be emotionally abusive.

- A persistently negative view of the child, particularly as inherently bad, often combined with 'deserved' harsh punishment.
- Inconsistent and unpredictable responses, particularly where there is threat to or rejection of the child.
- Expectations which are inappropriate for the developmental stage of the child, either too high or too low, over protective or under protective
- A lack of emotional availability or responsiveness to the child
- No respect for personal boundaries of the child, not seeing the child as an individual
- Promoting mis-socialisation or poor adaptation
- Contradictory, confusing or misleading messages in communicating with the child which seriously distorts reality for the child or promotes confusion

- Serious physical or psychiatric illness of a parent, including periods of hospitalisation
- Induction of a child into bizarre parental beliefs
- Breakdown in parental relationship with chronic, bitter conflict over contact or residence
- Major emotional rejection of the child and parental inability to perceive his/her needs with any objectivity
- Major and repeated familial change e.g. separations, reconstruction of families
- Parental drug and/or alcohol addiction or involvement in seriously deviant lifestyles
- Entrenched offending behaviour which may be criminal and which might also lead to a term of imprisonment.

Behaviour in a child which may indicate emotional abuse includes:

- Very low self-esteem often with an inability to accept praise or to trust
- Lack of any sense of fun, over serious or apathetic
- Excessively clingy or attention seeking behaviour
- Over anxiety, either watchful and constantly checking or over anxious to please
- Developmental delay, especially in speech
- Substantial failure to reach potential in learning, linked with lack of confidence poor concentration and lack of pride in achievement
- Self-learning, compulsive rituals; stereotypical repetitive behaviour
- Unusual pattern of response to others showing emotions

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. There is no typical victim of forced marriage; it can happen to males and females, of all ages. Victims may have disabilities or have identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

The difference between forced marriage and arranged marriage

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. Consent is essential to all marriages – only the spouses will know if they gave their consent freely. If families have to resort to violence or emotional pressure to make someone marry, that person's consent has not been given freely and therefore it is a forced marriage.

2.4.9 Child-on-child Abuse (previously referred as Peer or Peer Abuse)

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via **child-on-child abuse (sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse)**, this includes abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexting.

The Academy and all staff should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (KCSIE 2023. para 60).

The Academy deploys a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and recognises that it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys will be boys." If there are no reported cases, there is no assumption that it doesn't happen. The Academy will support children to have the confidence to report concerns or incidents.

The local authority should make a decision, within one working day of a referral being made, about what course of action it is taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- whether the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47;
- any services required by the child and family and what type of services; and
- further specialist assessments are required in order to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

Additional information regarding Child-on-Child abuse is in KCSIE Annex A, [page 122](#).

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers may include but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- 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;
sharing self-generated indecent images (also known as sexting);
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element); and
- 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

Further details can be found in the DfE document (Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment December 2017 - updated 2022):

- the academy addresses the issues of children in tutor time, on value days, report through safeguarding procedures in place to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse;
- how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be investigated and dealt with;
- there are clear processes as to how victims, alleged perpetrators/perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported; DSL and team involvement and police involvement through the pastoral teams.
- abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”;
- recognises the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and the different forms child-on-child abuse can take, such as: a) sexual violence and sexual harassment;
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - sexting: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation-for-schools>. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) Education Group has recently published sexting advice for schools and colleges; and
 - initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

2.5 Guidance for Staff

If staff need further guidance, having spoken to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they may contact their union representative or the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. Information may be found on the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership website. Appendix A also lists further names and contact numbers.

2.5.1 Private Meetings with Students

- (a) Staff and volunteers should be aware that private meetings with students may give rise to concern. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one to one meeting is necessary, but, where possible, such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access, or with the door open, or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people, and another student or adult should be present or nearby. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff should seek to ensure that another adult knows the interview is taking place.
- (b) Meeting with students away from the Academy premises should only be arranged with specific approval of the Principal (or one of the Leadership Group).

2.5.2 Physical Contact with Students

- (a) Physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, parent or observer. Touching students, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm can, if repeated regularly, lead to serious questions being raised. As a general principle, staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with their students. It is particularly unwise to attribute touching to their teaching style or as a way of relating to students.

- (b) Any form of physical punishment of students is unlawful as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. It is important that staff understand this both, to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the Academy.

Where physical contact may be acceptable:

- (a) There may be occasions where a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance, which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is, and what is seen to be by others present, normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same student over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, he/she should seek the advice of the Principal.
- (b) Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with students from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include; showing a student how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment; demonstrating a move or exercise during games and PE; and contact activities at a Youth Club. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and the possibility of such contact being mis-interpreted.
- (c) There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a student physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury on others, or self-injury, damaging property or causing disruption. In such cases, only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be to restrain the student. Where a member of staff has taken action to physically restrain a student, he/she should make a written report of the incident and copies be given to the Principal and necessary persons.

2.5.3 Caring for Students with Particular Problems

- (a) Staff who have to administer first aid should ensure wherever possible, that other students or another adult are present, if they are in doubt as to whether necessary physical contact could be misconstrued.
- (b) Wherever possible, staff that have to help children with toileting difficulties should be accompanied by another adult, and students, wherever possible, should be encouraged to change themselves. It is accepted that there will be some situations where students will present particular problems for staff and the emphasis will be on what is reasonable in all circumstances.

2.5.4 Relationships and Attitudes

- (a) All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with students. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and students will be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and any sexual activity between a member of staff and a student under 18 years of age may be a criminal offence.
- (b) All staff should ensure that their relationships with students are appropriate to the age and gender of the student, and take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff of either sex are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.
- (c) From time to time staff may encounter students who display attention seeking behaviour, or profess to be attracted to them. Staff should aim to deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately

but must ensure that their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. In these cases, the member of staff should ensure that the Principal or person designated to deal with such matters is aware of the situation.

2.5.5 Where Conversation of a Sensitive Nature may be Appropriate

- (a) Many staff have a pastoral responsibility for students and in order to fulfil that role effectively there will be occasions where conversations will cover particularly sensitive matters. Staff must, in these circumstances, use their discretion to ensure that, for example, any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion.
- (b) Other staff in the Academy may, from time to time, be approached by students for advice. Students may also appear distressed and staff may feel the need to ask if all is well. In such cases, staff must judge whether it is appropriate for them to offer counselling and advice or whether to refer the student to another member of staff with acknowledged pastoral responsibility for the particular student.

2.5.6 Inappropriate Comments and Discussions with Students

- (a) As with physical contact, comments by staff to students, either individually or in groups, can be misconstrued. As a general principle, therefore, staff must not make unnecessary comments to and/or about students which could be construed as having a sexual connotation. It is also unacceptable for staff to introduce or to encourage debate amongst students in class, or elsewhere, which could be construed as having a sexual connotation that is unnecessary given the context of the lesson or the circumstances. At the same time, it is recognised that a topic raised by a student is best addressed rather than ignored.
- (b) Systematic uses of insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic comments are also unacceptable.
- (c) We recognise that students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. The Whistleblowing Policy may therefore need to be consulted and applied.

2.5.7 Extracurricular Activities

- (a) Staff should be particularly careful when supervising students in extracurricular activities, or a residential setting such as a ski trip, outdoor education camp or extended visit away from home. Typically, a less formal approach than usual is appropriate in these settings, but that can be open to misinterpretation. Although a more informal approach is usual in such circumstances, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within the Academy.
- (b) Staff should take care in receiving or giving gifts to students which could be misunderstood. Gifts to individual students from staff will be exceptional and should be assessed against the Academy's policy or by a senior member of staff. Inappropriate gifts from students should be reported.

2.5.8 Reporting Incidents

Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued he/she should discuss this matter with the Principal or one of the ALT, where it is agreed, the member of staff should provide a written report of the incident.

A DETAILED WRITTEN REPORT MUST ALWAYS BE MADE IF A MEMBER OF STAFF HAS BEEN OBLIGED TO RESTRAIN A STUDENT PHYSICALLY (Physical Restraint Policy), OR WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE BY A STUDENT, OR OTHER ADULT.

2.6 Allegations Against Members of Staff

Further information is contained within the Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff and volunteers linked to the Safeguarding Policy.

Where allegations do not meet the harms threshold ('low level concerns'), these concerns will be dealt with promptly and appropriately. The Academy creates a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. All staff will be clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of Grace Academy Solihull.

2.6.1 Action Taken by a Member of Staff who has a Concern or Hears an Allegation

- (a) **STAFF MUST IMMEDIATELY INFORM THE PRINCIPAL OF ANY CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS.** There must be no attempt to investigate the allegations.
- (b) A Full written account made of what the student has said; this account should be dated and signed.
- (c) The student must not be asked to write anything down as this may compromise any subsequent police action.
- (d) The member of staff receiving the allegation should make a written record using the students' own words. (If the concern/allegation is against the Principal, staff should inform the Lead for Child Protection who will inform the Chair of Governors).

Action To Be Taken By The Principal/Designated Member Of Staff/Line Manager:

THE PRINCIPAL/LINE MANAGER MUST NEITHER TAKE ANY ACTION NOR COMMENCE INVESTIGATIONS BEFORE CONSULTING THE DESIGNATED OFFICER (DO). It is the responsibility of the Police and Social Inclusion and Health to investigate allegations of abuse.

THE PRINCIPAL/LINE MANAGER MUST NOT INTERVIEW THE CHILD, THE MEMBER OF STAFF OR OTHER POTENTIAL WITNESSES.

However, the Principal will be required to make enquiries to determine whether the allegation may be true and what action to take. The enquiries at this stage should be by way of a fact finding investigation in order to establish the FACTS of the allegations and obtain sufficient information to enable further consultation with Designated Officer or a referral to Social Inclusion and Health e.g.:

- Was the student in the Academy on that day?
- Was the teacher in the Academy on that day?
- Did the student have contact with the member of staff?
- Have any other potential witnesses come forward?

Following confirmation that there was the potential for contact, the Principal should:

- Seek advice/consult with the Designated Officer
- Ask for a written account from the member of staff hearing the allegation

- Where possible, receive a written account from the person making the allegation 📄
Record any information about times, dates, location, and names of potential witnesses.
- In the absence of the Lead, the EWS Child Protection Specialist Officer should be consulted.

Initial Consideration By The Principal And Lead For Child Protection

The Principal and Designated Officer must consider the allegation and determine the appropriate way forward.

If there is any possibility that Social Inclusion and Health or the police involvement might be appropriate, either because the alleged behaviour might constitute a criminal offence or might raise issues of the safety or welfare of children, the Lead must consult his/her counterparts in the Police and Social Inclusion and Health without delay.

There are four possible outcomes:

- (a) An immediate referral to the joint agencies (Police and SIH) under the local Child Protection procedures.
- (b) Further local enquiries to be made to gather more information/clarification.
- (c) The allegation may have been prompted by inappropriate behaviour by the member of staff, but that the child protection thresholds are not met. In this there may be a need for further investigation and possible consideration, in conjunction with HR, under the local disciplinary procedures.
- (d) The allegation was false and unfounded. This will include allegations, which relate to the use of reasonable force to restrain a pupil.

The issue of whether suspension is appropriate should be considered at this stage.

2.6.2 Suspension

A MEMBER OF STAFF AGAINST WHOM AN ALLEGATION IS MADE WILL NOT AUTOMATICALLY BE SUSPENDED. THE PRINCIPAL WILL CONSULT WITH A HR REPRESENTATIVE TO ENSURE THE CORRECT PROCEDURE IS FOLLOWED. The statement of procedure for allegations policy will be followed.

A risk assessment will be completed for each individual case to determine whether the member of staff should be suspended. This assessment will take into account:

- The context of allegation
- Background information re the member of staff
- Information re family/student

This assessment will be recorded and a copy kept on file. If the decision is made to suspend, a copy of the risk assessment and any alternative measures must be shared with the Director and Chair of Governors.

2.6.3 Initial Considerations

It may not be immediately obvious that suspension should be considered, and this course of action sometimes only becomes clear after information is shared with, and discussions had with other agencies. In

some cases, early or immediate suspension may impede a Police investigation, and therefore the decision whether to suspend may have to be delayed until sufficient evidence has been gathered.

DfE Guidance indicates that suspension should be avoided in such cases, wherever possible, and should not be seen as an automatic response to an allegation. This applies to all staff including the Principal.

Suspension will only follow after discussion with the Designated Officer/EPM/Chair of Governors. **THE DECISION TO SUSPEND REMAINS THE DECISION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND GOVERNING BODY** When considering suspension regard will be given to the following factors:

- (a) The nature of the allegation
- (b) Assessment of the presenting risk
- (c) The context in which the allegation occurred
- (d) The individual's contact with students
- (e) Any other relevant information
- (f) The power to suspend
- (g) Alternatives to suspension

The joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance makes clear that suspension should only be applied if one or more of the following grounds apply.

- A child or children would be at risk
- The allegation is so serious that summary dismissal for gross misconduct is possible
- It is necessary to allow any investigation to continue unimpeded

A decision to suspend is for the Principal/Governing Body. Suspension should only be considered if:

- Information, received indicated that the member of staff may have committed an act of gross misconduct
- His/her continued presence at the Academy could impede an investigation
- He/she could pose a risk to the child and/or other children at the Academy If the member of staff will be vulnerable by remaining in the Academy.

SUSPENSION IS A NEUTRAL ACT, NOT A DISCIPLINARY SANCTION, AND WILL BE ON FULL PAY. PAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE, MUTUAL AGREEMENT TO REFRAIN FROM WORK, ALTERNATIVE DUTIES/LOCATIONS OR REMOVAL FROM DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENT MAY ALSO BE USED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSION.

Suspension may be considered at any stage of the investigations.

2.7 Support Mechanisms

Grace Academy support mechanisms in place for staff who are suspended embrace a number of elements.

2.7.1 Personal Support

Any member of staff who is subject to an allegation and subsequently suspended will be encouraged to seek advice and support from their Professional Association or Trade Union.

2.7.2 HR Support

When a member of staff is suspended from duty, a HR advisor will advise on the process involved.

Such advice will include;

- A named point of contact
- The suspension process, including the support mechanisms
- Details of the procedures to be followed in relation to any police investigation where appropriate
- An update on the progress of any police investigation
- Details of any internal procedures, e.g. disciplinary, where appropriate
- An update on the progress of any internal procedures

Contact with the suspended member of staff will be maintained by the named contact at least once every four weeks throughout the period of suspension.

2.7.3 Professional Support to Suspended Staff

The Principal will ensure that processes are in place to provide professional support to the suspended member of staff.

This should include the name of the member of the Academy's staff nominated to support the suspended colleague, who should be independent of any current or pending investigation. The role of the nominated member of staff will include, where appropriate

- Providing an update on Academy life and events
- Helping with access to professional development
- Keeping the suspended member of staff updated with educational developments

Contact will be maintained throughout the period of suspension, with discussions between the individual and the named contact taking place at least once every four weeks.

If the suspended member of staff is the Principal, the CEO will inform the Principal.

The CEO will identify a nominated senior colleague to offer the support outlined above where appropriate, i.e.

- Providing an update on Academy life and events
- Helping with access to professional development
- Keeping the suspended member of staff up to date with educational developments and in addition
- Liaising over issues relating to the management of the Academy
- Maintaining links with the Governing Body

Contact will be maintained throughout the period of supervision with discussions taking place at least once every four weeks and reported to the Executive Director who should be independent. When the suspended member of staff is the Principal, the CEO will maintain links with the Governing Body of the Academy.

2.7.4 Confidentiality

All staff should maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with the relevant professionals such as the safeguarding lead. The Principal, Chair of Governors (or nominated Governor) and LEA Officers have responsibility to safeguard confidentiality as far as possible.

Sensitive information will only be disclosed on a “need to know” basis to other professionals involved in the investigative process. While weighing the factors as to whether suspension is necessary, available alternatives to suspension will be considered e.g.

- Leave of absence
- Undertaking different duties which do not involve direct contact with the individual child or other children
- Providing a classroom assistant or other colleague to be present throughout contact time

2.7.5 Action Plan

The Children Act 1989 established that the welfare of the child is paramount. This, however, must be considered alongside the duty of care to staff. Any individual subject to an allegation could be offered welfare support.

2.7.6 Planning and Recording

A record of the decisions reached and the rationale behind them will be recorded, along with the agreed action and strategies to manage the situation. The plan will clearly indicate the following:

- Any restriction to normal contact or activity
- Issues of contact with children
- Arrangements for monitoring and welfare support in relation to the member of staff 🏠
Monitoring and support available to the child

The senior colleague will keep a record of the actions taken in the course of the investigation. The member of staff will be informed of the decision taken at the earliest opportunity.

The following headings will be used when recording the action plan:

Assessment of risk

The presenting risks should be recorded, outlining the details of the allegations, the risk factors identified and the rationale of any decisions made in view of the risks.

Action to be taken

Who will do what? By when? Include reasons for the agreed action.

Welfare support

This is both for the child and the member of staff, and is a means of monitoring the process.

Consideration will be given to how best to manage information, with regards to who should be told what, when and how. This is particularly in respect of parents, carers and the media.

SUPPORT OF STAFF WHO HAVE NOT BEEN SUSPENDED – BUT AGAINST WHOM AN ALLEGATION HAS BEEN MADE.

Any member of staff who is subject to an allegation should seek advice from their professional association or trade union.

When any member of the Academy's staff is subject to allegation, the Admin Manager will advise that member of staff of the process involved.

ALLEGATIONS WHICH CALL FOR AN IMMEDIATE REFERRAL FOR CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SOCIAL CARE.

- Where students have suffered, are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm. The harm may be of a physical, sexual or emotional nature.
- Where the student is alleging that a criminal offence has been committed. Any **PHYSICAL** injury to a student may constitute a criminal offence of assault and must therefore be treated as a child protection referral.
- Any allegation of a sexual nature.

2.8 Examples of Actions that may be interpreted as Abusive

2.8.1 Physical Abuse

Any form of physical assault (including attempts) e.g.

- Punching
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Smacking
- Shaking
- Slapping
- Throwing a missile at a student (e.g. pen, board eraser etc.)

2.8.2 Sexual Abuse

Any form of sexual assault (including attempts). Refer to 2.4.3 in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation.

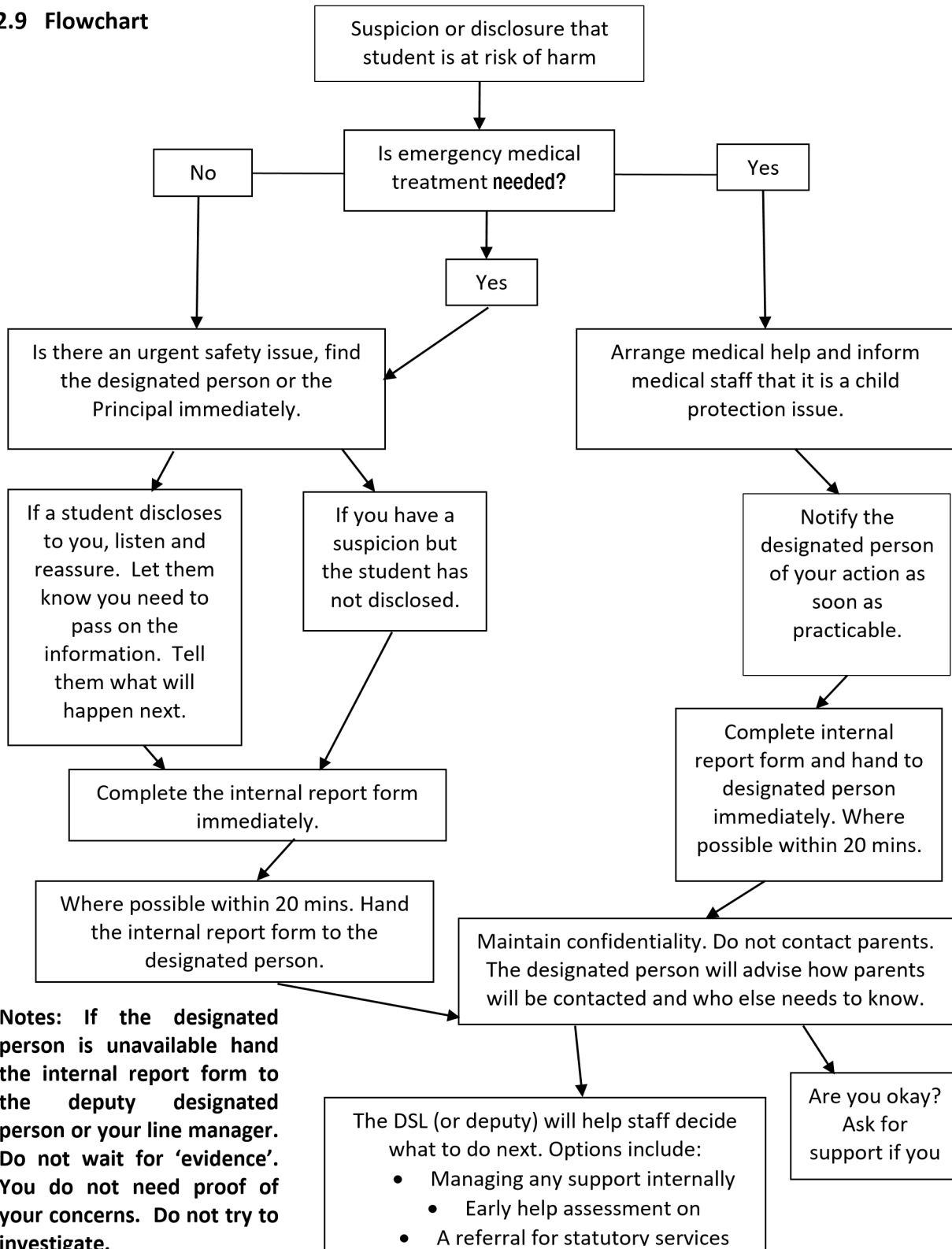
- Abuse of a position of trust
- Possession of indecent photographs of children (including computer images)
- Showing indecent or pornographic material to children
- Inappropriate touching, language or behaviour toward any child for sexual purposes
- Inappropriate use of text messages, email or other IT toward any child for sexual purposes

2.8.3 Emotional Abuse

- Racist comments or behaviour or failure to address these in others
- Homophobic comments or behaviour or failure to address these in others
- Bullying or failure to address these in others
- Persistent sarcasm

- Belittling students e.g. persistently placing a child in a corner or corridor
- Creating a climate of fear in the classroom
- Damaging a child's self-esteem through persistent lack of warmth & positive regard

2.9 Flowchart



Notes: If the designated person is unavailable hand the internal report form to the deputy designated person or your line manager. Do not wait for 'evidence'. You do not need proof of your concerns. Do not try to investigate.

ANNEX 1 - Child Protection Procedure

At Grace Academy Solihull our procedures are in line with those agreed by the Solihull Safeguarding Children's Partnership and by the school's Local Governing Board.

We will therefore ensure that:

- We have a 'designated member of staff' who has received appropriate training and support for this role, in accordance with mandatory requirements.
- We have a minimum of one additional member of staff who will act in the absence of the designated member of staff and has also received appropriate training for this role.
- We will ensure designated staff attend training every two years and all staff are provided with training every two years as a minimum. Staff will be updated more frequently if there are any changes in legislation or guidance for example 'The Prevent Duty'
- Every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and their role and what the backup arrangements are if the DSL is unavailable.
- All staff are familiar with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as the staff code of conduct and these issues are included in the induction for each new staff member
- All staff have training to look for the signs and indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated lead but know that they can also refer direct to Children's Services (Social Services) if needed
- We will ensure that all staff are aware that it is important to identify any concerns about children at as early a stage as possible so that their needs can be identified and monitored and appropriate support put in place
- All staff are aware that they should raise any concerns about colleagues or other adults to the Principal or the DSL
- All parents / carers can view and have access to student policies on the academy website
- We will refer any child believed to have suffered or to be likely to suffer significant harm to Children's Social care without delay, and will follow up any such referral
- We will ensure the immediate safety of any child felt to be at serious risk by taking appropriate action and by involving other relevant agencies as necessary
- We will maintain effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at CP case conferences wherever possible and providing reports as a matter of course. We will contribute to multi – agency assessments of children's needs where appropriate and work in a fully integrated way with other relevant services as appropriate.
- We will relentlessly pursue good outcomes for pupils in difficult circumstances

RECORDING/REPORTING OF CONCERNS:

- Written records are kept of all concerns, whether or not there is a need to refer the matter immediately, and that these records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations
- Green forms are used for safeguarding concerns, these include:
- The child's social worker is notified of any pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan who is absent from school without explanation for more than 2 days
- The LA is notified if we are concerned about a child's attendance as a potential safeguarding concern. For example if a child is missing in education, this is highlighted in the attendance policy
- Any new concern or relevant information about a child subject to a Child Protection Plan will be passed to the child's allocated social worker
- If a child subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves the school, records will be transferred to the new school and the child's social worker informed of the change. This would also be the case for transition and the sixth form
- If academy staff are unsure how to proceed in a potential Child Protection situation, or require advice, this will be appropriately sought via the DO, or the link social worker for the school, a duty social worker or directly from the Safeguarding board. (Useful numbers are listed below).

3. Early Intervention And Help

- We recognise that when a child or family may be experiencing difficulties, support is most effective if it is provided at as early a stage as possible
- Any concerns will be identified by staff, discussed with relevant colleagues and parents and support put in place. Effective monitoring systems will be used to assess the effectiveness of interventions and outcomes.
- If appropriate support is not available within school's own resources, an Early Help Assessment will be completed to identify the child's needs and enable additional support to be sought from other agencies
- A Team Around the Child will be established where appropriate and a Lead Professional identified or intervention from the Academy family support worker.

4. Essential Safeguarding Contacts – Grace Academy Solihull

Name and role:	Address, telephone and email address:
Academy Designated Safeguarding Person	Dawn Russell Grace Academy Chapelhouse Road Chelmsley Wood B37 5JS 0121 329 4624 dawnrussell@graceacademy.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person	Rachael Wright Grace Academy Chapelhouse Road Chelmsley Wood B37 5JS 0121 329 4642 rachaelwright@graceacademy.org.uk
Nominated Governor	Nicole Fowles nfowles@graceacademy.org.uk
Duty and referral team (DART)	Solihull: 0121 788 4330
Mash:	Birmingham: non emergencies: MARF – access referral via Birmingham SCB website. Solihull: 0121 788 4333 Birmingham: 0121 303 1888
Child Services – out of hours	Solihull: 0121 605 6060 Birmingham: 0121 464 9001
Local Authority staff allegations	LADO on duty 0121 788 4310 cpru@solihull.gccx.gov.uk http://solihullscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_alleg_ag_staff.html

CAMHS Solihull:	1 Downing Close B93 0QA 01564 732 860	Bishop Wilson Clinic B37 7TR 0121 246 4445
CAMHS Birmingham:	The Blakesley Centre B25 8RN 0121 683 6151	
Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit	0121 788 4310	
Local Schools Safeguarding Board	Solihull MBC The Bluebell Centre West Mall B37 5TN 0121 788 4325	
NSPCC helpline NSPCC Under 18's helpline NSPCC Website	0808 800 5000 0800 1111 nspcc.org.uk	
Barnardo's	0800 008 7005	

ANNEX 2 - Role of a designated Safeguarding Lead

The designated safeguarding lead is a member of the leadership team. The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place as part of their role. (KCSIE 2023).

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

The Academy has one or more deputy designated safeguarding lead(s). Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead.

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this **lead responsibility** should not be delegate

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- 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;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;

- 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.

Work with others

Liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;

As required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the designated officer(s) 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

Undertake training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) will 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.

The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- 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 Academies 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;
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Understand and support the school or college 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 Academy may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

- The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the Academy's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure the Academy's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- 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 academy in this; and
- Link with the local LSCP to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

Child protection file

Where children leave the Academy ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Availability

- During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the Academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Teams, or other such mediums, is acceptable.
- There are no expectations for the designated safeguarding lead or deputies to arrange cover for out of academy hours/out of term. However, by agreement, appropriately safeguarding staff can provide contact details for emergency consultation with other agencies/colleagues.