



Enfield County School for Girls

Safeguarding Policy

Respect, Responsibility, Co-operation, Equality and Generosity of Spirit

September 2026

Approved by:	The Governing Body	Date: September 2026
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Versions	1 – November 2021: updates based on advice from Safeguarding Review by Angela Corbett, including; legislation updates/information, more clarity on key personnel, school context table, definitions, roles and responsibilities, extensive information on; child on child abuse, online harms, sharing nudes and internet safety, 2 – January 2022: formatting and ordering changes 3. July 2022: LADO details update, change of term ‘peer on peer abuse’ to ‘child on child abuse’ 4. September 2022 : Updates relating to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022; paragraph 6 ‘Staff Training and Induction’ - information added on child on child abuse; paragraph 14: reworded definition on ‘child on child abuse, information added on LGBTQ+ children; NEW paragraph 15: Domestic Violence and our response in school, paragraph 23: Procedures for Managing Concerns and more detail on what prevents a child from disclosing abuse. 5. July 2023 Update with name of new Safeguarding Governor 6. September 2023 – Updated in response to KCSIE 2023. Added: Information on annual review of policy; staff changes, comprehensive changes to responsibilities, training and implementation of internet monitoring and filtering, terminology changes regarding students absent from education, reference to reporting ‘low level’ concerns about staff to the Headteacher, details on reporting safeguarding issues regarding lettings to the LADO, mention of ‘zero tolerance’ to transphobia, changes to legal age for marriage, whistleblowing information added, recruitment online searches of shortlisted candidates, addition of paragraph on Artificial Intelligence and various minor changes and order changes for clarity. 7. July 2024 – Updates following Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024: LADO name change; adding a bullet to the definition of safeguarding, adding ‘exploitation’ to references to abuse and neglect, Early Help definition and additions to list of indications of referrals, change of ‘prison’ to ‘custody’, ‘unexplained or persistent absence’ has replaced ‘missing in education’ when referring to safeguarding issues, in response to the Cass review; ‘gender questioning’ has replaced ‘transgender’, changes to radicalisation wording. Other small changes.
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	8. September 2025 - updates in response to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. Key additions: Further reference to government guidance documents Online Harms and safety: addition of terminology; including 'conspiracy theories, misinformation, disinformation and 'fake news' Reference to the DfE digital self-assessment tool for tech standards and its implementation in school More information on Alternative Provision and our responsibilities to perform checks and reviews More detailed definitions of extremism Re-write of section on artificial intelligence Additional information on kinship care and special guardianship November 2025 P31 Update to reflect completion of audit and self-assessment of DfE 'meeting digital and technology standards in schools' September 2026 – Changes in response to KCSIE 2026: Reference to all staff in school to read Part One of KCSIE regardless of whether they have direct contact with children; 'verbal abuse' added to clarify this is also emotional abuse, reference to the Cass Review and the support for children who are gender-questioning, updates regarding staff training requirements, added section on mobile phones to comply with new guidance, more detail regarding school's response to mental health, more detail on use of AI, updates on information sharing and safer recruitment and allegations against staff
Original date approved	September 2025
Approved by	School Governing Body
Date of next review	September 2026
Policy created by	Julia Scott, Designated Safeguarding Lead
This policy is informed by statutory and guidance documents	Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)



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	Crime and Policing Act (2026) Children and Wellbeing Act (2026) The Cass Review (2024) Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) The Online Safety Act (2023) Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education (2025) Working Together to Improve Attendance (2025) Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children 2021) 'What do if you are worried a child is being abused' (information sharing 2018) Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018) Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners (DfE 2015); The Prevent Duty 2015 Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (2019); Guidance for Schools: Coronavirus (COVID 2019) (last updated March 2021) Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (revised DfE 2021); https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information (Home Office October 2015). London Borough of Enfield safeguarding practices and guidance NSPCC Learning
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Designated Safeguarding Lead	Julia Scott (SAHT)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen O'Brien (DHT)
Looked After Child and SEND Co-ordinator	Edel McGinley (AHT)



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Safeguarding Governor	Angela Osei-Owusu
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Bruno Capela 020 8379 4392/2850
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285

The DSL will ensure that this child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety is reviewed at least annually. The DSL will also ensure procedures and implementation of the policy are reviewed regularly.

School Statement

Enfield County School for Girls believes every child has the right to feel safe and secure and that they should be protected from any circumstance or practice which causes them harm. At Enfield County School for Girls we have a 'child centred' and highly co-ordinated approach and we will always work to protect our children and young people and keep them safe and from harm. Enfield County School for Girls recognises the importance of our duty to safeguard our students and that we have an active role in protecting them from harm and promoting and supporting their physical and mental well-being so they grown up in the safest of environments and thus enable the very best outcomes.

Purpose and aims

This policy will make clear to staff, volunteers, visitors, parents and carers our expectations and our legal duty to safeguard and promote the safety of our students. The focus is on prevention, protection and support and our commitment to working extensively to this end. This policy will:

- Be informed by key legislation and statutory duties – particularly the most up to date versions of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Make explicit Enfield County School for Girls safeguarding culture and our recognition that 'it could happen here'
- Make explicit specific safeguarding concerns, their features and how these are recognised
- Identify key staff and their roles and responsibilities
- Make clear our processes and operational duty and how we communicate as professionals and share information, both in school and externally
- Make clear our duty to report, refer, monitor and evaluate when safeguarding concerns are identified
- Make explicit the potential safeguarding issues around attendance and children who have unexplained absence, for example the risks and links to sexual or criminal exploitation, modern slavery and trafficking, neglect or any form of abuse
- Ensure that this policy and our practice aligns closely with our attendance policy



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- Meet the needs of our school and ensure consideration is given to our local community and school context to enable us to keep our students safe and protected from harm both inside and outside school
- Inform and support colleagues in carrying out their professional duty to safeguard our students at all time

Our Ethos

Safeguarding and protecting our students is our priority at Enfield County School for Girls. We recognise we have a duty of care and responsibility towards the students in our school and we will carry out this duty with the fullest regard for the safety and well-being of our students throughout the school day, during extra-curricular activities, school visits and, as far as possible, in the community. Our ethos and our 'culture of vigilance' means:

- We will provide students with a range of opportunities to develop their own sense of safety and equip them with skills to flourish in an ever-changing world, providing a comprehensive 'stay safe' curriculum embedded throughout the school to equip our students with the skills to thrive in modern Britain.
- Every adult in the school community and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Enfield County School for Girls is aware of the important role part that staff play in noticing concerns and being able support and help students to prevent issues escalating.
- Staff maintain the attitude that is 'could happen here' with regard to safeguarding concerns. Staff must always act in the best interest of the child or young person and report issues in a timely manner.
- All staff and regular visitors will undergo training to enable them to recognise the indications of abuse and harm and will know how to respond to a disclosure and how to report and record a concern.
- All staff, in whatever capacity (including visitors and governors), will act proactively to ensure the welfare of all students, especially if they believe a child is at risk of significant harm. All children have the right to be happy and to live their lives free of any form of abuse, threat or danger and we will take seriously any allegation or concern relating to any student and act upon it quickly and in line with statutory guidelines. **Staff will never promise secrecy and will make it clear to a child or young person that they will act immediately on information that suggests they are at risk of harm.**
- Enfield County School for Girls is a listening school and all children experience a 'open door' policy with regards to sharing worries, concerns or difficulties; children are encouraged to talk to any teacher or adult they feel comfortable with and all staff are supported to develop their pastoral and safeguarding skills.
- Enfield County School for Girls will give, throughout the curriculum, opportunities to develop the skills needed to identify risk, build resilience and stay safe. Students will develop essential life skills to ensure they are prepared for the adult world in modern Britain. These skills will predominantly be taught through Personal Development lessons in line with the current Personal Social Health and Economic curriculum, the statutory Sex and Relationship Education Guidance and our eSafety initiative.
- Enfield County School for Girls will work in partnership with build effective working relationships with parents, carers, staff and external agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Enfield Safeguarding Partners.



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The Designated Safeguarding (DSL) team

Ms Scott is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Mrs Helen O'Brien is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the absence of both Ms Scott and Mrs O'Brien any other trained member of the designated senior team can ensure that processes and procedures are in place and that policies are followed. Due to the split site nature of Enfield County School for Girls, it is deemed appropriate that we have several designated child protection trained staff and so our Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo, Edel McGinley and our Progress and Achievement Leaders (PALs) have completed Designated training. Day to day support is given to the DSL by our SEND/CP administrator who has also had DSL training.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- 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
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

As in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday

Harm means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; Health includes physical and mental health; ill-treatment includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms of maltreatment. Someone can harm or abuse a child by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused by some in their family, a peer, a stranger, someone in the community or in an institution, Children can also be abused online or technology can be used to enable abuse. Children can be abused by adults or other children.

All staff will be aware of the indications of abuse (these are included in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026). It is essential that staff know what to look for identifying indications of abuse. More detail of indications of abuse are included in Appendix 2 of this policy. If at anytime a member of staff is unsure they should speak to the DSL or the Deputy DSL.



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Definitions of harm:

Abuse	Any form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. 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 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 persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve verbal abuse; 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
Sexual abuse	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 commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
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 as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

For more information see Appendix 2 of this policy

School Responsibilities

Our duty of care to all our students is our primary function and we are mindful of the extent of our roles and responsibility to ensure this. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteer and regular visitors to Enfield County School for Girls to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and always work in a way that will safeguard and promote the safety of every child in school. This includes the responsibility of keeping the environment safe to enable students to learn. We will closely adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) to ensure we meet our safeguarding responsibilities and we will seek to continually monitor and self-evaluate to provide a consistency of care to fulfil our duty to safeguard our students. At Enfield County School for Girls will ensure that:

- the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is in place and is reviewed at least annually, is available on the website and has been written in line with Local Authority guidance and the requirements of the Safeguarding Partners (formerly the LSCB) policies and procedures
- all members of school staff are an integral part of the safeguarding process and that safeguarding children and young people is a key function compatible with their as their primary role as educators
- all staff on site are all alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of suffering harm and that all members of staff are clear on how to report their concerns to a designated member of staff



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- a senior member of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and reporting child protection issues is Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for overseeing safeguarding and monitoring and filtering in the school and there is trained and Deputy Designated Lead who will act in the absence or unavailability of the DSL. There will be cover for these roles from within the Senior Leadership Team in the event of both being absent.
- the designated member of staff will share information on a strictly 'need to know' basis to protect the rights and dignity of the child
- will ensure that we safeguard students' welfare by addressing and educating students on issues of personal safety in the community and online
- will refer matters to the police where there is suspicion that a serious crime has been committed (a serious crime could be; possession of a knife, possession of a controlled substance, circulating or producing indecent images or a serious instance of assault or bullying)
- will safeguard students in school by addressing bullying especially when aggravated by issues of sexuality, gender questioning, racial or cultural factors, disability or special educational needs and will have a zero-tolerance policy to abuse on these grounds
- we will incorporate guidance set out in the Cass Review (2024) regarding the support and well-being of children who are gender questioning and always communicate with parents and carers regarding these children - unless there are specific safeguarding issues that prevent this
- we will ensure that single-sex spaces, such as toilets and changing rooms are always available
- If a child requests to 'socially transition' we will work closely with parents and carers and create a plan of support for the child without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. We will refer to guidance in the Cass Review to ensure the child is supported and their needs are met.
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection process that all adults who work here, whether permanent or temporary or voluntary are suitable to work with children
- will act swiftly and appropriately on any allegation made against a member of staff in accordance with Safeguarding Partner guidelines
- will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities to refer any concerns about staff including low level concerns to the Headteacher
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding of students
- ensure there is sufficient supervision in place for those managing safeguarding concerns
- we will monitor and ensure the well-being and learning of all our 'Looked After' students by assigning a LAC co-ordinator who will regularly review the progress of our Looked After students and report back to the senior leadership team and the school governors
- will ensure both school sites and outdoor spaces are well maintained and kept safe and free from obstacles and materials that may cause harm
- will ensure that visitor access is monitored and controlled as far as possible by fob entry, security doors and gates and clear visitor procedures
- if a student leaves school permanently and we do not receive notice from a destination school then we will classify the student as 'missing in education' and report to the Local Authority within 10 days



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- We will comply with the DfE statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' and we will work the local authority (LA) and children's services where absences indicates a safeguarding concern.
- the school attendance team will monitor attendance and report and refer any inconsistencies and concerns in school attendance that may suggest a safeguarding concern, for example; fabricated or induced illness or child sexual exploitation
- We will give special consideration to children who are absent from education (formerly referred to as missing from education) or who have prolonged and persistent or repeated absences
- school trips and visits are organised in line with Safeguarding Partners guidelines and that all appropriate risk assessments are carried out.
- where residential trips are organised the companies used are responsible for the vetting and checking of the DBS records of their staff
- we will ensure that necessary safeguards are in place within individual departments where students may come into contact with specialist equipment, machinery or chemicals and students will be expected to wear appropriate safety wear and adhere to strict safety guidelines at all times
- When a student is educated off site on what is commonly referred to as 'Alternative Provision' we will continue to take responsibility for safeguarding that child
- We will monitor attendance and when a child is 'absent from education' we will inform the local authority within 10 days
- Where students are new on roll we will make adequate steps to obtain any safeguarding/child protection records pertaining to that student. Similarly, if a student leaves Enfield County School for Girls we will ensure all safeguarding/child protection records are sent securely to the student's new school
- We will ensure that when a student undertakes work experience linked to school, that we will ensure that the placement has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. The school will consider the specific nature of the work experience and if checks are necessary if it falls into the sphere or 'regulated activity'
- We will aim to identify and support those who are Young Carers and keep an up-to-date record of students who take on a caring role
- We will report to the Local Authority any 'private fostering arrangements' we find out about and we will investigate an instance where a child is not living in the family home or another adult aside from members of their immediate family are caring for the child.
- We will monitor the use of the school building and premises outside of school hours for non-school activities and ensure that any individuals, organisations, community groups or associations and that there are proper child safeguarding procedures in place and the organisation letting our school premises fulfils its obligations to protect and safeguard any children in its care.
- If school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation is using our school premises for running an activity for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform the local authority designated officer (LADO), as we would with any safeguarding allegation about an adult working with children.



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- We will ensure that when a parent or carer elects to remove their child from school to 'electively home educate' that we inform Enfield Local Authority and that we do not remove the child from role until we are assured that this arrangement is recognised by Enfield Local Authority. If we have any safeguarding concerns regarding a child who is being home educated, we will make a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) at Enfield Children's Services.
- Enfield County School for Girls will regularly self-evaluate and review its safeguarding procedures and protocols, for example using the NSPCC Self-Assessment tool to ensure full compliance.
- Enfield County School for Girls will give students the skill and knowledge they need to thrive in modern Britain; in doing this we embed a rich and varied 'stay safe' curriculum across the school. All students from Key Stages 3 – 5 will have a Personal Social, Health and Economic curriculum embedded within their school experience. The curriculum team and the pastoral team will work together to enable a structured and cohesive approach to the statutory requirements of PSHE and the Sex and Relationship curriculum.
- The DSL will meet regularly with each Progress and Achievement Leader to ensure all students are supported and that those on formal plans are closely monitored and any issues or concerns around students' well-being are addressed with a clear plan of action.
- We will comply with current GDPR legislation and protect student and family data. We are aware however, that when there is a significant safeguarding risk we are obliged to share information with our partner agencies or the police in the best interests of a child.
- We will ensure that all staff who work in school – whether they have direct contact with children or not – must have read Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One, (DfE 2026)
- The Governing Body and the local authority are accountable for ensuring the effectiveness and compliance of this policy; however we as a school take collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students

Training

Training is embedded in our school protocols to ensure all staff in the school community are able to fulfil their duty to safeguard our students. The measures in place are as follows:

- The Headteacher will ensure that the school meets its requirements to train its staff on issues around safeguarding and child protection, including online safety.
- When new staff join Enfield County School for Girls they will be informed of the safeguarding procedures in place and the arrangements for reporting concern and be given a copy of the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct Policy as well as Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. All staff are expected to read and understand these key documents and be aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe in school.
- New staff and visitors will be informed who the DSL and Deputy are and how to report a concern.
- Every new member of teaching staff will undergo safeguarding training delivered by the DSL during their first half term. This training will include information on the signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage and record a



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disclosure, how to report a concern as well as information on the role of the DSL and the referral system. The training will also inform staff about whistle blowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children

- In addition to the safeguarding induction, Enfield County School for Girls will ensure that there are procedures in place to assist staff to understand and comply with their roles and responsibilities as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One (DfE 2026).
- All staff undergo child protection training annually and throughout the year and all staff undergo comprehensive full training every 2 years
- Enfield County School for Girls will measure the impact of the training they deliver
- All staff in school receive child protection training - including those on short term contracts and trainee teachers - and are kept up to date on specific issues such as child-on-child abuse, online safety and online harms and are given an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- All staff receive weekly updates, information, guidance and further training, weekly and at key intervals throughout the school year to provide them with the skills, knowledge and confidence to fulfil their roles as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) Our school subscribes to The Key Safeguarding and staff will receive regular training and assessments to ensure they are confident in safeguarding
- Staff are given support, offered supervision and given time to fulfil their safeguarding duty. Staff are reminded that they are to reach out and ask for support if they have been affected by any safeguarding issues. Training is delivered sensitively and with staff well-being in mind
- All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers to our school will be given a copy of our safeguarding procedures. They will be informed who the DSL and the Deputy DSL are, as well as alternative staff members and what to do if they have a concern and how to report it
- The DSL, the Deputy DSL, all members of the safeguarding team and anyone who may be likely to make a referral or attend a CP conference or core group meeting will receive advanced safeguarding and child protection training at least bi-annually. In addition to this advanced training the DSL will ensure they keep up to date with their knowledge and skills at regular intervals – and at least annually – to be aware of developments within their role
- Enfield County School for Girls will actively encourage staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) provides specific guidance on specific safeguarding issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation. Staff are expected to read and sign off any documentation required using the 'Resources' and 'Local Policies' section of MyConcern
- Enfield County School for Girls will ensure that our students receive the right help, at the right time to address any risks and prevent issues from escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective and timely action. For example:
 - Failing to act and refer the early signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation



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- Poor record keeping
- Failing to listen to the views of the child
- Failing to evaluate concerns when things for a child do not improve
- Not sharing or delaying the sharing of information
- Lack of challenge to those who appear to not be acting

We aim to address all these areas of poor practice with our policies and procedures and ask that staff always seek advice when not sure.

- Staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues (see the list below). Staff should also be aware that some harmful behaviours can put children and young people at serious risk; these behaviours include: truancy, alcohol, drug taking and online behaviour such as sharing nudes or semi nudes. Staff should also be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves in child on child abuse, this may include bullying and online bullying and sexual violence or sexual assaults. Staff should be clear on our policy of bullying and child on child abuse. There can be power imbalances between children, this can be because of age, status, SEND or physical strength and the impact of abuse by one child to another can be as traumatic as abuse carried out by an adult.
- We are aware that expert and professional organisations are best informed to provide up to date information, guidance and support on specific safeguarding issues. For example the NSPCC, Anna Freud Centre, The DfE. The list below can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026), Gov.uk and other government websites.

The designated team will ensure the staff are made aware and receive the relevant training and guidance on specific safeguarding issues. These may include:

- children who have unexplained and persistent absence from school
- children missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- bullying and online bullying
- domestic abuse
- care-giver abuse – where a child is abusive to their parent and carer
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith or honour based abuse
- female genital mutilation



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- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate crimes (including racial and homophobic hate crimes)
- mental health
- missing children and adults
- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation and extremism
- sharing nudes and semi nudes
- relationship abuse
- sexual violence and harassment between children in education settings
- trafficking and modern slavery

Contextual Safeguarding

Staff also need to be aware of how to safeguard in our school context and respond to concerns that may be more likely in our community. Safeguarding issues pertinent to our students are linked to factors such as our location in Enfield, North London, social and economic and cultural factors and home factors such as increased exposure to the internet. We are aware of these contextual issues and will address them as detailed below:

Context	Issues	Our school response
Geographical factors	Road traffic – some of our students have long journeys and may be crossing many roads	• We give regular reminders about road safety • We tell students not to wear earphones or speak on their phone when crossing the road. • We allow students to wear bright coloured scarfs in the winter to be seen
Economic factors	London has a lack of affordable housing and some of our students may be living in temporary or overcrowded accommodation or may experience homelessness.	• we ensure the library is open before and after school to give students a place to work and study help when they are experiencing • we will communicate with staff if students are lacking equipment and provide spares if needed • We will provide work for students who are moved too far away until they are allocated a new school • We will make all possible efforts to keep in touch with students who may stop attending school however if we are unable to make contact we will report the student to the local authority and Education Welfare Officer as 'missing in education'.



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Social factors	London has had a high statistics for gangs and serious youth violence (SYV) Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCS) – In Enfield this is often carried out by older peers	- We will educate students through assemblies, form time and PSHE on the issues around gangs and serious youth violence (SYV) - We will support students who may have been affected on these issues, either through family members or witnessing incidents - We work closely with the Metropolitan Police and the Safer Schools unit in preventing SYV - We are alert to the signs of both criminal and sexual grooming and exploitation - We educate our students about issues around child on child abuse and the topic of healthy relationships - We support and refer immediately students who may be subject to CSE and CCE - We treat students as victims and vulnerable and do not blame
Cultural factors	Honour based abuse and forced marriage FGM	- We will discuss topics in RS, PSHE around culture and identity - We will support students and work with families where there is conflict - We will refer if we have concerns about safeguarding of students - We train staff on the issue of FGM and make them aware of their statutory duty to report any suspicions that FGM has been or will be carried out - We will educate students through a range of means
Home factors	Most students have ready access to the internet and may be unsupervised online Young Carer's (also a socio-economic factor as many of our parents do shift work or work in the 'gig' economy)	- We will continually address online safety through our curriculum, PSHE, assemblies and school wide initiatives - We will inform and educate parents and carers about issues such as online grooming - We will provide support and guidance to students and their families on how to address issues around internet harm - We will work to identify Young Carers in school - We will support Young Carers and keep a register of Young Carers - We will make referrals to Enfield Young Carers

Vulnerable Groups

At Enfield County School for Girls we recognise that any student has the potential to be vulnerable but we are aware that some students may face greater challenges than others and this may make them particularly vulnerable to harm. We are trained and keep up to date with current concerns in the community and we are aware that students may be at risk of multiple harms outside of the school and home environment; particularly through being exposed to serious youth violence, child sexual and criminal exploitation.



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The Pastoral Team at each site communicate daily and meet weekly to discuss the needs of their year group and information is passed sensitively to the whole school via weekly briefings, the school bulletin or email. Groups of students who are vulnerable are identified and monitored to ensure that they are achieving the best outcomes and are not falling behind from their peers. Vulnerable groups of students could include:

- Young Carers
- Bereaved students
- Student who are, or who have previously been in the care system
- Students who have a very long journey to school
- Irish Traveller Heritage students
- Gender questioning students – we will consider the broader needs of the child and (except in rare circumstances where there is a safeguarding risk to the child) always work in partnership with parents
- Lesbian, bisexual students or those unsure of their sexuality
- Students living in temporary or insecure accommodation
- Students who may be classed as Pupil Premium
- Students who have a disability
- Students who have a Special Educational Need
- Students who have mental health issues, may have self-harmed or have suicidal thoughts
- Students who may have a parent or carer in prison or is an offender
- Students who may have been exposed to gang culture
- Students who may be vulnerable to child sexual or criminal exploitation or 'County Lines' involvement
- Students at risk of serious violence (particularly through exploitation and gang involvement)
- Students at risk of being radicalised by extremist ideas ('push and pull factors')

Safeguarding and SEND

Enfield County School for Girls recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may face additional challenges and this is included in our staff training. These additional barriers can be:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury could relate to their child or young person's disability without adequate investigation
- Children and young people with SEN and disabilities can be severely impacted by bullying without outwardly showing signs
- communicating safeguarding concerns as they may lack speech and language skills, confidence or understanding
- Children who are neuro-diverse, such as those with autism, may be especially vulnerable to abuse



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All staff in school are aware of the particular safeguarding needs of students who may have special educational needs and disabilities and will be particularly vigilant and report concerns immediately. The DSL and SEND-Co will work together when dealing with reports of abuse involving children with SEND.

Looked After Children

Looked after Children (LAC) or students who have ever been in the care system may present particular vulnerabilities and our LAC or previously LAC students are supported and cared for throughout their time here at Enfield County School for Girls. Heads of Year, the Key Stage Co-ordinators, as well as our LAC Co-ordinator keep our LAC students 'in mind' and are vigilant to any safeguarding concerns. Communication between carer, social workers, the 'Virtual School' and other professionals is frequent and encouraged to protect our LAC students and to facilitate the best outcomes, socially, emotionally and academically. When children leave care and are deemed 'care leavers' the LAC will work with agencies, including the Local Authority and the appointed Personal Adviser to ensure the student's needs are met.

As with other students, our safeguarding protocols ensure that where a LAC or previously LAC student is deemed at significant risk then the DSL will act immediately; in the case of a current LAC this will involve immediate contact to the student's social worker.

We are also aware that some children may be looked after by family members or close friends under 'special guardianship' or 'kinship care' arrangements.

The Virtual School Head will have oversight of all children who are cared for by in local authority care and will promote the educational achievements of those in special guardianship and kinship care.

Our Looked After Children Co-ordinator is Ms E McGinley.

Children Involved in the Court System

From time to time students may be involved in the criminal and family court system, either as the subject of custody hearings as in the case of the Family Courts system or as witnesses, victims or perpetrators in the Criminal Court system. We will always support students throughout this difficult and vulnerable time and seek advice and guidance from relevant bodies and organisations and if necessary make reasonable adjustments with any related trauma or emotional upheaval. Similarly, when parents or carers are in custody we will provide emotional support and seek guidance in ensuring the child is helped and supported.

Online Safety and Online Harms

Online safety is an ongoing and growing safeguarding challenge to all schools and we take seriously our duty of care to give students with the skills and knowledge to be safe online. We embed the concept of online safety in school, focussing on the 4 Cs; conduct, content, communication and commerce.



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As educators, we ensure that students are protected from harmful content and made aware of the risks and harms posed by misinformation, disinformation (including 'fake news') and conspiracy theories.

Online safety is communicated regularly through assemblies, the school planner, form time and in ICT lessons, PSHCE and via our Safer Schools Officer. One of the ways we protect students in school is by having appropriate software and filters on all hardware in school and blocking access to any inappropriate sites.

We take seriously the dangers of phone use outside of school and parents and carers are given detailed information via the school website about how to protect their daughters and they are regularly updated on current online safety information via texts, emails, leaflets and talks at open evenings.

Students are made aware of the legal ages of accessing a range of social media platforms and they are given frequent warnings about the importance of protecting themselves via privacy settings, locations settings and the sharing of personal data. Students are informed of the National Crime Agency site CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) and a link is provided on the school website.

If students are found to have had communication from strangers, negative communication from peers or have been using the internet irresponsibly parents and carers will be informed and our Safer Schools Officer may be informed.

Parents and carers are encouraged to monitor their daughter's use of the internet, mobile phone and social media and take responsibility for their daughter's online safety outside of school.

Mobile Phones

In line with the UK government's Children's Wellbeing Act (June 2026), children under 16 are no longer permitted access to their mobile phones during the school day:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools>

In school we ask parents and carers to purchase a simple 'brick' phone for their daughters and ask that they do not bring a smartphone to and from school. We give parents and carers the opportunity to purchase a subsidised Yondr pouch to lock their phone in as they enter the school site and then to unlock it when they leave. Any phone communication between a child and their parent or carer must be done through the school office.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for children who need access to their phone for specific medical reasons or in exceptional circumstances; this will be done in consultation with home and school and may form part of a care plan.

Students are taught about the issues around mobile phone use, including the harms posed by social media. We make clear to them the benefits of not having access to phones in school, including improved focus and lack of distraction and better mental health and wellbeing.

Students in the sixth form are not permitted to use their phones around school, such as corridors, the dining room or lessons but may use their phones in the common room only.



Sharing Nudes

Enfield County School for Girls recognising the inherent risks posed by the internet and particular that young people are particularly vulnerable to harmful behaviours online. Children or young people who share nudes or semi- nude images or videos are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. We make strenuous efforts to educate the children and young people in our school to manage their online lives safely. The term 'nudes' and 'semi-nudes' is the term used by young people and covers all types of image sharing incidents.

The reasons for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated, though such images may be shared consensually, perhaps by those in relationships or friendships. Incidents may also occur when:

- A child or young person finds an image online and shares them with a peer
- Children and young people can digitally manipulate images online using software
- Images can be created or shared online and used to abuse peers or publically shame

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publically online, via 1;1 messages or in group chats and in closed social media accounts. These images or videos may include one of more children or young people.

Creating or sharing nudes or semi- nudes of children or young people under-18 is illegal (including those created and shared with consent). This makes responding to these incidents complex and delicate and staff must be aware of a range or risks when dealing with these incidents in school.

Many professionals may refer to 'nudes and semi-nudes' as:

- 'Youth produced' sexual imagery or 'youth involved' indecent imagery. These are legal terms to define images of children under 18
- 'sexting' many adults use this term but children and young people do not and see this term as referring to words and texts messages – not images
- Image based abuse – this is the term used to define non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Our school procedure for when managing an incident involving a nude or semi-nudes is that the incident should be referred to the DSL, Deputy DSL or in their absence a member of the SLT as soon as possible. The DSL will then hold an initial review meeting with the Deputy DSL and any other staff who may be aware – for example the member of staff who first became aware of the nude or semi-nude image or video then:

- The child or children involved will be spoken to (if appropriate)
- Parent or carers will be informed as soon as possible (unless doing so poses a safeguarding risk)

Disclosure of nudes and semi- nude sharing may be one off incidents or they may prompt further disclosures. Any further disclosures should be taken seriously. Children involved in nude and semi-nude sharing may suffer shame and embarrassment and so there must be dealt with sensitively and with due regard to their emotional well-being and steps



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must be taken to ensure confidentiality of their disclosure. Any information sharing should be on a strict 'need to know' basis. An initial meeting of the safeguarding team in school should establish:

- Whether there is an immediate or imminent risk to any child or young person
- If a referral should be made to the police or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image or images in order to safeguard the child – **in most cases images should not be viewed**
- If any other information is required to decide the best course of action
- Where the images have been shared and on which platforms
- Whether immediate action is required to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online platforms
- Any relevant information about children involved which is needed to assess risk
- If there is a need to contact another educational establishment or individual
- Where to contact parents or carers of those involved – in most cases they should be contacted

An immediate referral to the police and/or Children's Social Care through the MASH should be made if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe the child was coerced, blackmailed or groomed or if there are concerns that they did not consent or did not have the capacity to consent (for example if there are special educational needs).
- Your knowledge of the images or videos suggest the content depicts sexual behaviour out of the ordinary for the child's developmental age or the images or videos involve violence
- The images or videos involve sexual acts of anyone under the age of 13
- You have reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, for example they are presented as traumatised and may possibly self-harm or attempt suicide

If none of the above apply the DSL may not contact the police or Children's Services; however they can still choose to escalate the incident at any date if further disclosures or information is obtained later. A decision not to inform the police or Children's Services will only be made in cases where the DSL is confident they is enough information to assess the risks and with the knowledge that the risks can be managed within school and the local network of support. The information should then be reviewed at a later date to ensure there is no further information that changes the outcome of a referral or a decision not to refer.

When assessing the risks and a decision to refer the DSL and the safeguarding team will consider the following:

- Why was the nude or semi-nude shared? If it was shared consensually or if the child was put under pressure, coerced or forced to share.



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- Has the nude or semi-nude been shared beyond the originally intended recipient? And whether it was shared with or without the subject's consent.
- Has the nude or semi-nude image been shared on another online platform or anywhere else online? If so, have steps been taken to halt the spread of the image?
- How old are the children involved?
- Did the child send the nude or semi-nude to more than one person?
- Do you have particular concerns about the child's vulnerability? For example; SEND?
- Are there any concerns about informing the parents or carers?

The DSL will decide about the risk of harm to any children involved and whether a referral to Early Help or Enfield MASH is appropriate or whether any other agencies needs to be involved to support the child. The DSL will use their professional judgement in consultation with the safeguarding team in school to assess the risk. When discussing the incident of nude or semi-nude image sharing the DSL and the safeguarding team will:

- Identify what the image contains – **without viewing the image wherever possible**
- Find out how or where the image or images have been shared and whether other children are involved who may need support
- Reassure the children involved that the school will support them and that they will be kept informed of the process throughout
- Recognise the pressures that children are under online and support parents and carers to understand this
- Not 'victim blame' but remain solution focussed asking relevant and useful questions that help the child talk about the incident and share further information
- Discuss the issues of consent and healthy relationships to support the child to make good choices. Explain that no-one should make anyone else feel uncomfortable or pressure them to do anything they are not happy about. Let them know who they can talk to in school for support or give them or their parents or carers information on external support
- Explain the law on sharing nudes and semi-nudes for those under 18. It is important to let them know that the law is there to protect and not criminalise young people
- Signpost to the IWF (Internet Watch Foundation) and Childline's Report Remove Tool. Report Remove enables children and young people to report and image shared online and to see if it is possible to have the image removed. This needs to be done as soon as possible.

Enfield County School for Girls will support parents and carers throughout the process and will only withhold information where we believe that telling parents or carers will pose a safeguarding risk. In the event of us believing a child will be



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harm if we inform them their child has created or shared a nude or semi-nude we will seek the support of Enfield MASH and/or the Police and make a referral if necessary. In all circumstances we will:

- make parents and carers aware of the support available for their child as well as signposting them to support to deal with their own feelings.
- We will support them with advice on how to talk to their child about the incident and that curiosity about sex is normal at their age.
- Advise them on the law on sharing nudes and semi-nudes
- Keep them updated on support is getting
- Direct them to CEOP (Child Exploitation Online Protection) if there are further concerns regarding grooming or exploitation online

Staff and parents or carers must not intentionally view any nudes and semi-nudes unless there is good reason to do so
The image should never be copied, printed, saved, stored or further shared (for example sent to another agency) as this is illegal.

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

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled by online activity) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded.
- Denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Enfield County School for Girls is aware that some children and young people with particular skills and interests in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL or Deputy DSL should consider referring into the Metropolitan Police's Cyber Choices programme <https://www.met.police.uk/cyberchoices>. This is a national police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency and it aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and encourage them to use their cyber skills in a more positive and useful way.



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Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation bullying or general on-line safety.

Students will learn about online harms such as frauds, scams and 'phishing' as part of their PSHE curriculum.

Child-on-child abuse

Child on child abuse is any form of harm perpetrated by one child to another. Enfield County School for Girls recognises that children and young people are at risk from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and harm by other children. This can include:

- bullying (including online bullying)
- sexting (including coercion to share nudes or semi-nudes, sexual blackmail)
- photographing a student without their consent (including 'upskirting' (taking pictures under a skirt buttocks or private parts to humiliate or for sexual gratification) or creating indecent images using by editing images or using generative AI)
- gender based violence and sexual assault
- misogyny, including hatred of women and girls and 'incel' views
- Homophobia - LGBTQ+ children may be at greater risk from other children and may feel unable to tell an adult
- initiating and 'hazing' type ritual – these can often surface online
- pressuring a child or young person to have sex and sexual harassment

Abuse carried out by other children and young people can be just as harmful as that carried out by adults. Abuse between children can happen at any time but the risk of this kind of abuse can be higher on the journey to school or at the end of the school day. When a child or young person abuses another child it is important to recognise the need to support the perpetrator as well as the victim – especially as a child or young person who abuses may themselves have been or are being subject to abuse. We are aware that any form of child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue with regard to both parties and we will act in such a way that appreciates the ages and vulnerabilities of all those involved.

Such abuse will always be taken seriously and the same safeguarding procedures will apply as those in place where the perpetrator is an adult. Staff must never dismiss or underplay harmful or abusive behaviour enacted by one child or young person to another.

Staff are made aware of the impact of child-on-child abuse and the long-term detrimental effects that abuse from peers can have on a person's long term mental health and well-being. Particular emphasis is given to destroying myths and misconceptions around child-on-child abuse, such as:

- Child on child abuse is not part of the 'rough and tumble' of adolescence



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- bullying is never 'character building'
- leadership skills do not lend themselves to creating victims
- victims are not to blame for their abuse

Enfield County School for Girls will take these steps to prevent the risk of child-on-child abuse:

- Ensure staff are aware of the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and how to identify them
- Tackle inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively minor)
- Have robust policies on dealing with behaviour such as cyber bullying
- Ensures staff and students are aware of the policies and procedures
- Supervises students at lunch and break times
- Takes steps to prevent isolation
- • Separates children if needed
- • Where risk is identified, a student risk assessment is put in place

The following systems are in place to actively encourage students to report child on child abuse:

- all children and young people know who they can talk to in school
- assemblies and form time sign post students to help and support
- our safer schools officer will visit school and provide support when necessary

When incidents of child on child abuse are discovered there will be a full investigation that will involve:

- recording the incident on MyConcern
- all students will be spoken to separately and they will have the opportunity to write an account of the incident
- where an incident involves a child or young person from a different establishment there will be liaison with the separate establishment
- all children and young people involved (victim and perpetrator) will be supported throughout the process
- the DSL will balance the wishes of the child with their duty to protect the other children
- we will work with our local safeguarding partners in the best interest of the child and young person



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- the DSL may need to go against the child or young person's wishes and inform the police or social services. This will be handled sensitively and will be explained to the victim and appropriate support will be put in place.
- parents or carers will be informed about the incident and how their child is being supported, unless this poses a greater risk to the child.

Victim, perpetrator and other children or young people impacted by child on child abuse will be supported in the following ways:

- support will be initiated to suit the individual circumstances
- all children and young people involved will be supported by appropriately skilled staff
- the needs and wishes of the child will be taken into account at all times and their views and needs will be actively sought
- the children and young people will be protected and all steps will be made to keep them safe
- wherever possible the child or young person will be able to continue with their normal routine
- the victim will never be made to feel a nuisance or to blame for disclosing the abuse
- all reasonable steps will be made to protect the anonymity of a child or young person making an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual harassment
- a risk assessment or safety plan will be put in place if required
- support will be requested from Early Help, children's social care or other agencies if required

Domestic Abuse

The UK government's definition of domestic abuse is 'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality'.

Children who are exposed to domestic abuse are victims and seeing or hearing domestic abuse in the home can have a lasting psychological impact on a child. Children can be both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships.

We teach about domestic abuse and its impact through our PSHE curriculum; for example we have used Face Front Theatre's digital resource 'Whisper Me Happy'.

If we believe a child is witnessing or being exposed to domestic abuse in the home we will make a referral to Enfield Children's Services and if we believe a child over the age of 16 is a victim of domestic violence in their relationship we will contact the police.



Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where a child is encouraged, manipulated or forced to take part in sexual activity. Often children are given things such as money, gifts, drink or drugs in exchange for sexual contact. Sometimes children are made to feel special, offered affection or made to believe they are gaining status by being involved in sexual acts. Often the children are tricked or threatened with violence. Sometimes children are 'trafficked' or moved around the UK to take part in sexual activity and used by different people.

Child Sexual Exploitation is sometimes committed by older peers or it can be linked to gangs or criminal exploitation. The perpetrators often use the victims sense of shame or fear of getting into trouble to continue the abuse. Perpetrators come from a range of backgrounds and though victims may have specific vulnerabilities the methods perpetrators use mean that all children should be aware of the issue of child sexual exploitation.

County Lines and Child Criminal Exploitation

County Lines is where a group or gang exploit vulnerable young people or children to coerce, force, manipulate or deceive them into becoming involved in criminal activity. This activity usually involves selling drugs and moving the children or young people out of cities to smaller towns or rural communities to create new networks. The 'County Lines' refers to the phone lines used by the criminal networks to sell the drugs.

Young people in London are especially vulnerable to County Lines as there is an oversupply of drugs which creates opportunities for criminals who may want to sell their drugs to areas where they can set up new supply chains. Children and young people are often used to sell these drugs because:

- Young people may stand out less as they may not have convictions so can sell drugs more easily for criminals
- Young people may be easily persuaded or threatened to work for criminals
- Young people may be attracted to the idea of making 'easy' money, especially if there is family hardship
- The young person may be misled into thinking there is status or excitement in gang life

Many of the methods used to exploit children and young people to be involved in County Lines are the same as those for Criminal Exploitation; the child or young person may appear to consent to involvement in criminal activity at first; however, over time they find they cannot escape the criminals and they may suffer violence or sexual harm. Children who are forced to be involved in County Lines will be treated as victims.

Serious youth violence is an ongoing safeguarding concern as the use of or threat of violence, the carrying of weapons or the glorification of violence can be indicators of criminal exploitation or county lines and instances will be treated as a high-risk safeguarding concern.



Female Genital Mutilation

Enfield County School for Girls recognises that staff are well placed to identify concerns or indications that a student may be at risk of Female Genital mutilation (FGM) and training is given to staff on how to spot the symptoms. It is illegal to carry out FGM in the UK. It is also a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to perform FGM overseas or take their child abroad to have FGM carried out. The maximum penalty for FGM is 14 years' imprisonment. Staff are vigilant to the potential of FGM and are alert to the signs that a student may be at risk of FGM, for example the 'cutting season' during the summer and Christmas holidays. Where FGM has been carried out there is mandatory duty on teachers to report the crime directly themselves (section B Female Genital Mutilation 2003, inserted 2015, section 74, Serious Crime Act). This means that where FGM is discovered on a child under 18 through disclosure or other means, the member of staff must directly report to the police or face disciplinary action. The Home Office Guidance 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information' (October 2015) gives further guidance. **More information can also be found in appendix 2 of this policy.**

Honour-Based Abuse

Enfield County School for Girls recognises the issues of 'honour-based abuse' and 'forced marriage'. We are vigilant to the potential of honour being distorted within communities and possibility that students may be exposed to threat, danger or coercion and that this may take a number of forms. We provide guidance in these matters through staff training and address the topic in school to ensure that students have a voice and feel confident in discussing issues that may be potentially abusive. As of February 2023 it is illegal for anyone under the age of eighteen to marry. Encouraging or coercing anyone to marry at any age is illegal even if violence or threats are not used.

If a student is deemed at risk - or if there is any suspicion - of either forced marriage or honour-based abuse the DSL will take immediate action and will refer to Children's Social Care and the police.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Enfield County School for Girls recognises the threat that radical or extreme ideologies pose to children and young people. Our school values actively promote mutual respect for everyone, regardless faith or belief. In order

, which is 'the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence'

All staff have received full training in Prevent duty by the Local Authority and key staff have received refresher training and updates in order to disseminate information to the whole school community. The Prevent Duty is 'the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'. Staff are trained to be vigilant to signs that a student may be vulnerable to developing extremist views and staff are alert to the signs of radicalisation and extremism.

Extremism involves advocating or supporting an ideology or belief based on violence, hatred or intolerance. It is not specific to one set of ideologies but can be driven by a range of motivations, including political, religious or social beliefs. Radicalisation is the process of recruiting someone into an extremist and dangerous mind-set and this can be done by either groups or individuals whereby a young person is 'groomed' or befriended – often online – and then indoctrinated into



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accepting an extremist ideology. Sometimes a young person can be radicalised without the encouragement of groups and individuals by being exposed to online extremist content or views.

Extremist ideologies may include

- a radical or distorted view of Islam
- fundamentalist Christian beliefs
- far-right views or racist views
- misogyny or 'incel' culture
- radical or vocal opposition to fundamental British values

Extremist beliefs can develop into extremist actions that may take place either on or off-line and can include:

- hate speech
- propaganda
- incitement to commit violence
- threats and intimidation
- violence
- grooming or recruitment to dangerous and illegal groups
- terrorism

Young people are especially vulnerable to grooming and radicalisation by individuals and groups with dangerous ideologies and if a member of staff has concerns that any student may be at risk of grooming to extremism or radicalisation they are to refer to the Designated Lead immediately.

Students are safeguarded from the threat of radicalisation and extremism through a collaborative approach to building tolerance and respect and an adherence to fundamental British values. Students are given the opportunity to explore different points of view through discussions in a range of subjects, particularly Religious Studies and Personal Development lessons (PSHE).

Students are taught about the threat of extremism and radicalisation in sensitively prepared resources delivered in assemblies and form time. Students are encouraged to be open minded and thoughtful and are aware of the damage of narrow or intolerant ideologies; Enfield County School for Girls is a Holocaust Beacon school, teaching all students about the threat of extremism from a historical perspective.

- Appropriate safeguards are in place online through our school filtering and monitoring system and any breaches are passed to the DSL immediately by the school Network Manager



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- The DSL has had PREVENT training and will act as a point of contact for the school for any concerns relating to extremism of radicalisation
- The DSL will make referrals in accordance with Channel procedures and PREVENT and represent the school at any meetings of these organisations as required

Mental Health and Well-Being

Enfield County School for Girls is a 'mentally healthy school' where students are taught about mental health and well-being and are encouraged to seek support in school at any time. Students are given advice and taught techniques across all key stages to help cope with stress, improve resilience and deal with exam anxiety. Students who are struggling with their emotions are offered an 'open door' policy by the Progress and Achievement Leaders and may be given a 'time out' card to allow them a short break in a lesson. Mindfulness, meditation and grounding techniques are taught at Key Stage 3 and refreshers on these techniques are taught at Key Stage 4 and 5. All students are encouraged to talk about their feelings and taught the benefits of sharing anxieties and worries and helping one another.

Alongside a carefully structured programme of activities delivered by the PSHCE department in form time we are also able to offer more enhanced support for students who may need extra intervention. This includes:

- a school counsellor
- NHS Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- 'coping with stress' workshops in the lead up to exams

We will always contact parents and carers where we have concerns about a student's mental health and we will work in partnership with families. We cannot diagnose mental health disorders and will refer to the appropriate professionals for support and guidance.

We understand that mental health can sometimes be a safeguarding concern. Where there is self-harm (see below); suicidal ideation or intent or a possible eating disorder we will inform parents and carers and we may make a referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). On occasion we may also make a referral to Early Help or Child Protection to ensure a child is safe and the family is supported. We will make reasonable adjustments in school as necessary and we may also implement a medical care plan or a safeguarding support plan to ensure a child is supported in school.

Self-Harm

Self-harm is a complex and often misunderstood mental health issue and one that is taken seriously at Enfield County School for Girls. The Pastoral Team have undergone training in recognising and supporting students who may have self-harmed.

There are many myths around self-harm such as:



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- It is only a phase
- It is attention seeking
- They are copying their friends
- People who self-harm are suicidal
- It is the family's fault

Often self-harm can be a reaction to tension or emotional pressure. It can also be a reaction to shame or guilt and young people who self-harm describe a feeling of relief afterwards. Young people who self-harm often find it difficult to talk about their feelings and self-harm becomes a form of communication.

When we discover a student has been self-harming we will always contact home and inform parents and carers. Parents and carers may then be invited to a meeting with their daughter's Progress and Achievement Leader and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Students who self-harm will be put on an internal school 'Safeguarding Support Plan'.

If we continue to be concerned about a student self-harming, we will make a referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or Service for Adolescents and Families Enfield (SAFE). If we have concerns that the self-harm may be an indicator of a safeguarding risk we may contact Enfield Children's Services.

External Examinations

All examinations are undertaken in full compliance with JCQ rules as well as our safeguarding procedures. Where non-examination assessments are undertaken we ensure that preparation, tasks and the assessment are age appropriate and in line with our ethical, moral and safeguarding duties. For externally assessed examinations we ensure that safeguards are in place and that a student's well-being is paramount. All invigilators have DBS clearance and receive safeguarding and child protection training and ongoing support. When an examination centre notifies us of a safeguarding concern raised by an examination script we respond in a timely manner and will make a referral if necessary.

The 'Stay Safe' Curriculum in School

At Enfield County School for Girls safety, well-being and health are embedded in the curriculum. Students are encouraged to develop their own sense of personal safety and an awareness of Child Protection issues. As well as being taught about topics of a safeguarding nature students will also be encouraged to discuss and evaluate issues that they may encounter in order to help them make the best choices and to help them build greater self-awareness of a range of safeguarding concerns. We are aware that a 'one size fits all approach' may not be appropriate for all children and a more personalised and contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed. We will ensure that lesson content takes in the needs and vulnerabilities of different students and offer training and support to colleagues who deliver the stay safe curriculum, the PSHCE and SRE.

Students may be introduced to safeguarding issues in:



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- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHCE at KS3, 4 and 5)
- Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)
- Assemblies
- Workshops
- Theatre in Education visits and performances
- Form time
- Displays
- Curriculum
- Visits
- Library resources
- Posters and leaflets
- MS Teams

Students are also given information about outside organisations that can support them when in need, such as Childline, Kooth, Young Minds, the NSPCC or Enfield Young Carers

Filtering and Monitoring

As a school we will make sure that our filtering and monitoring systems are fit for purpose and ensure students are able to use school technology as safely and effectively as possible.

In line with the statutory requirements in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 we will review our monitoring and filtering systems annually.

Our school filtering system is provided by the London Grid for Learning (LGfL) and our monitoring system is provided by Smoothwall. The DSL takes responsibility for ensuring that these are in place and works with the Network Manager to ensure compliance for the safety of all students.

We have completed an audit and self-assessment on 'meeting digital and technology standards in school', as advised by the DfE, to ensure that we have the right digital infrastructure to enable the best and safest digital learning environment for students. We also have a full 'disaster recovery' plan in place in the event of a serious IT incident in school.

All school staff and visitors are aware of their responsibility regarding filtering and monitoring and they will report any concerns to the DSL, the deputy DSL or complete a concern on MyConcern.

Artificial Intelligence

At school we recognise the rapid evolution of AI and in particular generative AI, and that this can bring educational opportunities but can also produce content that is dangerous, harmful and inappropriate. We will follow safeguarding and behaviour procedures if we discover the misuse of generative AI in relation to anyone in our school community.



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Any instances of illegal or harmful AI material such as 'deepfakes' or digitally altered content; for example, indecent or semi-indecent content will be treated as a safeguarding concern and if appropriate a police report will be made.

As a school we will ensure our students are giving information and taught about the risks of using AI and generative AI. We will teach students how to report any concerns or incidents relating to AI.

All staff receive training on the safe use of AI in school.

We will be guided by the Department for Education document: Generative AI: product safety expectations 2025 in relation to the misuse of AI.

Procedures for managing concerns

All staff must follow the protocols in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) and Enfield Safeguarding Partners. It is not our responsibility to investigate a concern or determine the truth of a disclosure or allegation, however all staff have a duty and a responsibility to recognise concerns and maintain the attitude that it 'can happen here' when considering potential harm or abuse to a student. All concerns regarding the welfare of a child or young person should be raised as soon as possible with the DSL, the Deputy DSL or another member of the safeguarding team and these concerns will be recorded prior to any discussion with parents or carers.

Staff should be aware that children may not always be ready to tell someone about the abuse they have experienced or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children can be embarrassed, humiliated or scared and this can prevent them disclosing abuse. A child may also have vulnerabilities such as a disability, their sexual orientation or a language barrier that makes telling someone about their experiences harder. Staff should not let these barriers for disclosure prevent a professional curiosity and staff should always share concerns for a child with the DSL.

At Enfield County School for Girls the adults are well placed to observe any physical, emotional and behavioural changes or signs which indicate that a child may have suffered significant harm. We aim to create positive relationships between staff, students, parent and carers and the public to create a culture of trust that can enable disclosures of abuse which can alert us being alerted to concerns.

Reporting concerns:

Staff must immediately report:

- any suspicion that a child or young person is injured, marked or bruised in any way that is inconsistent with normal daily function or activities
- any explanation from a child or young person for an injury which is suspicious or inconsistent
- any behaviours which create suspicions that a child or young person may have suffered harm, for example a comment, a piece or art or writing or a nagging doubt about the child's demeanour
- any concerns that the child or young person may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment or poor treatment, for example, continuous lack of equipment or dirty and unkempt uniform



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- any concerns that a child or young person is suffering from abuse or neglect
- any significant changes in the child or young person's presentation, including lateness or absence
- any hint of disclosure, for example, sharing details about home then 'clamming up'
- any concerns regarding those who may pose a risk to children and young people, for example; may be living in a household where children are present
- any concerns about any adults in school and interactions with students

Staff are encouraged to be aware and actively consider children and young people who may be vulnerable to harm.

Disclosures and information may be received from other students, parents and carers or members of the public. At Enfield County School for Girls we recognise that these disclosures may be sensitive and difficult and so we will treat this information sensitively; however, such information cannot remain confidential and staff will share what has been communicated immediately with the DSL. Staff will not investigate themselves but will garner enough information to pass onto the DSL in order that they can make an informed decision on how to proceed.

Staff will:

- listen and take seriously any disclosure from a child or young person
- clarify information
- keep questions to a minimum and only use open questioning, for example; 'could you tell me what you mean by...'
- ensure that the child or young person is protected from having to repeat difficult or traumatic information as little as possible
- try to not react emotionally, for example; not show disgust, shock or surprise
- not express judgemental feelings towards the victim, perpetrator or anyone else involved
- never 'victim blame', for example, not saying things such as; 'why were you out so late in the first place?'
- never promise secrecy or confidentiality but make clear to the child or young person their duty of care to pass on information to the DSL
- reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in speaking out
- reassure the child or young person that they will be supported
- explain that only those who 'need to know' will be informed
- explain – where appropriate – what will happen next



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- record on MyConcern as soon as possible, or in the event of a network issue complete a paper report and alert the DSL
- in the event of serious disclosure of abuse let the DSL or the Deputy DSL know in person or by telephone immediately

Enfield County School for Girls adheres to the child protection procedures that have been agreed locally by Enfield Safeguarding Partners. Enfield County School for Girls will use London Borough of Enfield Threshold Guidance document when considering referrals to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Every member of the school staff, including visitors and volunteers, who work with children and young people are taught to maintain vigilance at all times and recognise 'that it could happen here'. When concerned about the welfare of a child and young person staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns, no matter how small and to not see these concerns as insignificant. Staff are encouraged to always 'err on the side of caution' and to speak to the DSL if unsure. Some referrals may follow a single disclosure or harm or abuse, however more often a referral may follow repeated 'smaller' concerns that accumulate over a period of time and build a picture that may point to harm – this is especially true of instances of emotional abuse or neglect. With this in mind it is crucial that staff are guided by this policy to pass on any concerns they have to the DSL to enable a full picture which can then substantiate a request for help for a child at the earliest opportunity. A lack of written records of concerns or a reliance on hearsay could lead to a failure to protect a child or young person.

It is not the responsibility of Enfield County School for Girls to investigate concerns or determine the truth of disclosures or allegations. All staff have a duty to pass on concerns in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be the first point of contact for concerns or queries relating to any safeguarding concerns. Any member of the school staff, temporary staff or visitors who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is being harmed or is at risk from harm or abuse must report this immediately to the DSL or in the event of the DSL not being available the Deputy DSL or if the deputy is not available, the next most senior member of staff. The procedure for managing disclosures:

- All concerns about a child or young person should be recorded immediately on MyConcern, if for any reason MyConcern is not available the concern should be written on paper and handed to either school office in an envelope marked 'safeguarding concern' and the office should contact the DSL immediately.
- When a concern is received via MyConcern the DSL will decide what action is necessary and will seek guidance from Enfield MASH at Children's Services if necessary. Any actions and decisions taken will be recorded on MyConcern.
- Any referrals will be made online to Enfield Children's Portal. In the event of the Portal not being available a referral will be made via email or telephone to the duty team on 020 8379 5555.



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- If it is deemed that there is an imminent risk of significant or serious harm a referral will be made to the MASH and/or police immediately. In the event of a criminal act taking place on school premises or if police assistance is required, Enfield County School for Girls will refer to the NSPCC guidance document 'When to Call the Police'

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

- Anyone can make a referral. If a member of staff believes a child's situation is not improving they should ask for the concern to be reconsidered and then raise the concern again with the DSL or the Headteacher.
- Staff should follow this policy when reporting and recording concerns in the first instance. However staff may share information directly with Enfield MASH (Enfield Children's Services) or the Police if:
 - there is an emergency or the DSL, the Deputy DSL or another senior member of staff are unavailable;
 - they believe a direct report is the only way to get support or help for a child or young person.
 - If a member of staff does make their own referral they must always report this to the DSL as soon as possible

If a member of staff believes their concerns are not being responded to appropriately and in accordance with this policy they should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If they still feel their concern is not being dealt with adequately, they can approach Enfield Children's Services directly. For whistleblowing advice contact the NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

Record Keeping and Information Sharing

Staff, governors and other professionals will use the DfE's data protection guidance for schools to help them comply with data protection law.

Enfield County School for Girls use 'MyConcern' safeguarding software. If staff have any concern they are to log it on MyConcern. All information is kept confidential at all times and only shared on a strictly 'need to know' when in the best interests of the child.

- Each concern should contain
 - a clear outline of the concern
 - the date, time and place of the concern
 - details of any actions taken
 - names of any other students linked to the concern
 - uploaded files, scanned in documents or information linked to the concern
 - completed body maps if necessary



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Any paper records will be kept in a secure locked cabinet and not with the student's ordinary school files. Invitations and records of conferences, meeting minutes, referral letters and core group information will be scanned and uploaded to MyConcern and the paper files will be stored in the locked cupboard.

When a student transfers to another school information will be passed on in a timely manner either via recorded delivery (paper) or through secure digital transfer via MyConcern software and school will check that the information has reached its intended source. The DSL will contact a school prior to a child transferring to another school.

When a new student arrives at Enfield County School for Girls we will endeavour to obtain any child protections records in a timely manner.

Where a child is changing settings and information indicates a risk to others and/or to the individual child, the receiving school is responsible for assessing the risk and putting a safety and support plan in place. The DSLs from both settings should also have a conversation when there are concerns.

Any information sent by email between staff about a student in school will be kept general and minimal and the student's first name and the initial of their surname only will be used in an email.

Records on students who have been a subject to child sexual abuse and who leave school will be archived and stored securely and indefinitely in keeping with new legislation following serious case reviews on historic child sexual abuse enquiries.

Initial communication from an outside agency will require an email and a verified email address as initial correspondence with unknown parties may not take place over the phone. Early Help Forms or sensitive student information will be sent via a secure means such as Egress Switch.

When information sharing with another agency we will consider what is necessary to share and what the receiving setting needs to know, as well as ensuring the information shared is suitably contextualised. Professional judgment should be used to ensure information shared is focussed and proportionate.

Children on Child Protection Plans

Children's Services will convene a Child Protection conference following an assessment under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm. When a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan:

- The child will be monitored through 'core group' meetings of professional at 5 weekly intervals to ensure the actions on the safety plan are being carried out by the adults around the child. Within 6 months of a child being placed on a Child Protection Plan a review conference will take place to decide if the plan should continue or whether the child should be placed on a Child in Need Plan or cease to be on a plan.
- The DSL, or a member of the Safeguarding Team will always liaise with Children's Services and other agencies when necessary and take part in strategy discussions and other multi agency meetings to contribute to the assessment of risk around a child or young person.



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- Enfield County School for Girls will usually be represented at core group meeting or conferences by the DSL or another appropriate member of staff. In any event, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible; any member of staff may be required to contribute to this process.
- All reports for child protection conferences or Section 47 assessments will be prepared in advance using Enfield County School for Girls Welfare Inter-Agency Welfare form. In order to complete such reports, information will be sought from the student's class teachers, form teacher and the Progress and Achievement Leader.
- Child Protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that staff at school are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved and so we will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children's Services or whose child is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan.
- We will ensure that if a child is on a protection plan and is absent without explanation for two days we will contact the assigned social worker
- We will work collaboratively with social workers at all times to create a 'joined up' approach in the best interest of the child and family

Early Help

Early Help is defined by Keeping Children Safe in Education as 'support for children of all ages that improves family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse'. In the event of an Early Help referral the DSL, the deputy DSL or an appropriately trained member of the safeguarding team will make the referral and liaise with external agencies as required. Staff may be required to be part of this process, by sharing and providing information and in some instances attending meeting or liaising with professionals. Early Help referrals should be monitored and reviewed and if situations do not improve a referral to Child Protection may be deemed appropriate. Factors and vulnerabilities that determine a referral to Early Help may be:

- Children with additional needs such as SEND
- Children or young people facing housing issues such as unstable accommodation, frequent moves or homelessness
- Families under stress through mental health issues, drug or alcohol issues or parents in custody
- Refugee or asylum status
- Those vulnerable to discrimination based on ethnicity, sexuality, religion or disability
- Children at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Children with communication difficulties
- Children without adequate supervision or who might be exhibiting risky or harmful behaviours
- Parents or carers who are struggling to cope with parenting



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- Children who are young carers
- Children at risk of exploitation by gangs, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) or Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Children at risk of being drawn into anti-social behaviour, gangs or serious youth violence (SYV)
- Children at risk of being radicalised
- Children is frequently going missing from school, home or care
- Children at risk of using drugs or alcohol
- Children at risk of modern slavery or trafficking
- Children who have experienced multiple suspensions or is at risk from permanent exclusion
- Children who have a parent in custody or is affected by parental offending

Enfield County School for Girls will make use of other agencies and support services within the local authority to ensure the best support for children and their families. These agencies may include:

- Service for Adolescents and Families in Enfield (SAFE)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- The Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Team
- Parent Support Service
- Young Carers Association

Physical Intervention

Staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort. Reasonable force may sometimes be necessary to prevent injury or harm to a student or to others; force will be no more force than is needed to safeguard a student or manage an incident. A shoulder touch is a safe point of contact should a member of staff need to get a student's attention – for example when there is a noisy corridor and a hand on a shoulder may be appropriate or if a student is severely distressed. Where a student has specific needs or vulnerabilities, such as SEND needs and may on occasion require physical intervention by a member of staff, when this is the case individual support plans may be written and reasonable adjustments made. We adhere to the Department for Education advice documentation: Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (January 2016) for information on the power to use reasonable force.

Physical intervention, which causes unnecessary injury or distress to a child, may itself be considered and investigated under safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.



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Searching and Confiscating

On rare occasions it may be necessary to search a student's belongings or outer clothing, for example. When it is suspected that the student may have in their possession dangerous or illicit items that may cause harm to themselves or to others. On these occasions we will adhere to the Department for Education advice document; Searching, Screening and Confiscation (January 2018) and comply with our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights. We have the right to confiscate any items that may pose a risk to anyone in the school community and we may pass confiscated items onto the police if necessary.

Alternative Provision

When a student is educated off site on what is commonly referred to as 'Alternative Provision' (AP) we will take responsibility and seek written confirmation to ensure that the educational provider meets with legal health and safety requirements at the site and that the provider has performed appropriate safeguarding checks on all staff.

We will ensure that the placement meets the needs of the child and ensure that we always know the child's whereabouts during school hours. We will hold regular reviews – at least half-termly – to ensure the alternative provision placement remains safe and meets the child's needs.

We will continue to provide PSHE and SRE education and guidance.

Working with Parents and Carers

Enfield County School for Girls is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people to support them to understand statutory responsibilities in safeguarding.

Parents and carers will be able to view our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on our website and we will provide a paper copy if requested.

School will inform parents and carers of their legal duty to share information with partner agencies when requested, however we will inform parents and carers where possible if this is happening – unless doing so could be seen as a potential safeguarding risk.

Enfield County School for Girls will treat parents and carer with dignity, respect and courtesy. We will respect a parents or carers right to privacy and confidentiality and not share sensitive or personal information unless we are given permission to or where it is necessary to protect a child from harm.

Enfield County School for Girls will share information regarding referrals where appropriate, however a lack of parental or carer engagement or consent regarding concerns about a child will not prevent the DSL from making a referral if it is deemed necessary.

In order to keep children and young people safe and enable proper care, Enfield County School for Girls requires parents or carers to provide up to date information, including:



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- At least two full adult names contacts phone numbers for every student
- Full names and contact details for those with parental responsibility
- Emergency contact details (if different from above)
- Full details of any other adult authorised who collects or cares for a student
- Ensuring all contact information is up to date and new contact details are provided should a parent or carer change their contact information.

We will also make reasonable adjustments to parents and carers who may have difficulty in maintaining up to date contact information; for example, if there are housing or homelessness issues or a parent is fleeing domestic violence. We will only share information with those who have parental responsibility or if a parent or carer has given written consent for us to do so.

We will comply with any court or legal orders prohibiting contact between students and parents or carers and liaise with legal and professional bodies for advice when there is a lack of clarity or concerns about contact between a student and a parent or carer. We will use our SIMS database and inform the school office and the relevant support and teaching staff should a parent or carer be denied access or contact with a student and we will inform the police or the relevant bodies immediately should any court order be breached.

Enfield County School for Girls promotes strong links with parents and carers and is committed to the collaborative approach to supporting students. It is important for students that parents and carers and school are open and share information to provide the best outcomes for students; parents are always welcome to contact school but are asked to be mindful of the necessity of choosing the most appropriate method and being aware of the safeguards in place in any busy school.

In order to keep all students safe in school parents and carers are asked:

- To always call school in advance to make an appointment to meet a member of staff
- Not to park on site without permission or a permit from the office
- To always sign in and out at reception and wait to be met by the relevant staff member
- To wear a school visitor badge at all times on school premises
- To not walk around the school building unaccompanied
- Never to approach another student to discuss an incident involving their daughter
- Never to challenge another parent on school site
- Never to approach a member of staff outside of school to discuss an incident or grievance
- Never use aggressive behaviour or foul language in or around the school premises

More information on the above can be found in our School Visitors' policy or by contacting either school office



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The School Governing Body

The Designated Governor for safeguarding is Angela Osei-Owusu.

Child protection and safeguarding is of vital importance in the running of a school and where appropriate the governors will ensure that there are sufficient resources within school to enable staff to carry out their safeguarding obligations.

The governors will ensure that the designated team are given sufficient time and training to carry out their duties. The Designated Governor and the Designated Safeguarding lead meet regularly, and no less than termly to discuss the safeguarding culture and its implementation within school.

The governors will review the safeguarding practices on a regular basis, and no less than annually to ensure that:

- we carry out our duty to safeguard the welfare of its students
- members of staff and visitors are aware of the procedures within school, current practices and issues and receive adequate training on this matter
- child protection training and procedures are an integral part of the induction process for all new staff at school
- we maintain adequate records and record all instances of a safeguarding nature including instances of racism, bullying and other serious concerns
- we adhere to safer recruitment procedures in line with current LSCB guidelines
- where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are substantiated the school will take swift and appropriate disciplinary action

Safer Recruitment

Enfield County School for Girls will ensure that the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteachers and the School Business Leader have completed appropriate safer recruitment training. The Headteacher and the School Business Leader will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2026).

Enfield County School for Girls will ensure all staff, temporary staff, visitors and volunteers are suitably and carefully vetted and unsuitable candidates are rejected. We will always require evidence of original academic certificates and will not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if unclear and will undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks and use any other means of ensuring the most suitable people to work with children are recruited and selected.

When shortlisting staff for positions in school we will be inform them that we may carry out online checks as part of the due diligence process.

The School Business Leader will maintain the Single Central Record and require safer recruitment checks in line with statutory legal requirement. We will ensure all our staff are appropriately qualified and we will verify relevant employment history and ensure any employment gaps are accounted for. We will also ensure that all supply staff, temporary staff and volunteers comply with the all the relevant safer recruitment checks.



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We have a rolling programme in place for updating our staff Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) in School. Every five years, employees are required to update their DBS so that any changes are incorporated into the Single Central Record. Employees also sign a declaration annually to confirm there is no change to their Criminal Records Information. The declaration forms part of the Code of Conduct Policy that our school has adopted from the Local Authority

All visitors must sign in through InVentry secure entry system and they must produce an up to date DBS certificate on arrival or they will not be able to move around the school unaccompanied. The school will keep a copy of all visits.

Every visitor must comply with our visitor's code of conduct and uphold our values and ethos. If at any time a visitor appears to conflict with our values they may be asked to leave the premises.

If a visitor is delivering content in school, for example in an assembly and the school deems the content unsuitable, the visitor will be asked to stop the delivery and will be directed to more suitable content or to leave the school premises.

Safer Working Practices

All adults who come into contact with children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. Enfield County of School is aware of their legal duty to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

Enfield County School for Girls will ensure that all adults working with us, for us or visiting us will wear a lanyard at all times. A blue lanyard indicates an employee or a governor who has been DBS cleared; a green lanyard indicates a visitor who have been DBS cleared and a red lanyard indicates anyone who has not been DBS cleared. Those wearing a red lanyard must be supervised at all times.

In line with the Crime and Policing Act (2026), any person volunteering in school in a role that involves contact with children for 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight is in regulated activity. We will therefore ensure that we obtain an enhanced DBS or liaise with other settings the individual is working in to decide who obtains the DBS check.

Where a volunteer does not fall under regulated activity, we will use our professional judgement as to whether we apply for a DBS check.

All staff will be provided with a copy of the School Code of Conduct at induction. They will be expected to know the school's Code of Conduct Policy and sign to say they have read and understood so.

If staff, visitors or volunteers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts within school and who they are with and for how long. Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This advice can be found in 'Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (May 2019). All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.



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Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

Managing Allegations Against Staff

Enfield County School for Girls aims to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children. We recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made. Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are very difficult for all concerned. We recognise that many allegations are genuine and there may some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

All allegations will be investigated thoroughly, quickly and fairly. Protection will be given to the child and the person subject to the allegation will be supported.

Enfield County School for Girls will always ensure that the procedures outlined in the local authority arrangements for managing allegations and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE (2026) are adhered to and where appropriate, we will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Lead (LADO).

Allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children would apply when staff (and this includes visitors or supply staff) have (or alleged to have):

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

On occasions and adult may have acting in a way outside of school that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. Where appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works will be undertaken. If in doubt we will seek advice from the LADO.

When an allegation is made against an adult that meets the above criteria it should be reported immediately to the Headteacher who will be the 'case manager'. This includes allegations made against agency and supply staff, volunteers and contractors. Any allegation against an individual from a third-party organisation; such as a supply agency or a teacher training provider must also be shared with the organisation. We will maintain responsibly for gathering the facts and managing the safeguarding process whilst working closely with the third-party organisation who will usually lead on any disciplinary action,

Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chair of Governors.

In the event that neither the Headteacher nor the Chair of Governors is contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by the member of staff acting in place of the Headteacher,

The case manager will conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures and KCSIE to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.



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If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and / or children's social care will be convened.

The case manager will immediately discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. Where the case manager deems there to be an immediate risk to children or a criminal offence has been committed, the police will be contacted immediately. All discussions, agreed actions and communications will be recorded in writing. The LADO should be informed within one day of any allegations being made.

If the initial discussion leads to no further action, the case manager and the LADO will record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned.

The case manager will ensure that the individual who is subject to the allegation is informed as soon as possible explaining the likely course of action guided by the LADO and the police where necessary. The case manager will appoint a named representative to keep the person informed about the progress of the case and consider any appropriate support.

The case manager will ensure that parents of the child or children involved are formally told about the allegation as soon as possible and kept informed of the progress of the case, but only in relation to their child. They will be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against any school staff whilst an investigation is in progress.

The case manager will monitor the progress of the case to ensure that it is dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair manner.

The case manager will carefully consider whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school, or until the allegation is resolved. It will be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious it might be grounds for dismissal. The case manager will seek views from HR and the LADO, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved. Where an individual is suspended they will be provided with a named contact in school.

The case manager will discuss with the LADO whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) should be made where an allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services.

The school has a legal obligation to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required; where it considers an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person poses a risk to a child. In the case of a member of teaching staff, the case manager must consider making a referral to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

If an allegation is made against a supply teacher, agency worker or contractor, the Headteacher will liaise closely with the agency involved. The Headteacher will ensure that any allegations are dealt with following the school's procedures and in liaison with the LADO.

If an allegation is made against a governor, the Headteacher will follow local authority arrangements for managing allegations, liaising with the LADO.



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Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to have been malicious or false will be removed from personnel records, unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information. For all other allegations a written record of details of the investigation and the outcome will be retained in the individual's personnel file in line with KCSIE and a copy provided to the individual.

In cases where allegations are proven to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious the LADO and case manager will consider whether the person who made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. A referral to children's social services may be deemed appropriate. Allegations proven to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious will not be included in employer references.

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Headteacher will consider whether disciplinary action should be taken against a child, or whether the police should be asked to consider action against an adult.

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

On conclusion of a case in which the allegation is substantiated, the case manager and the LADO will review the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practices to help prevent similar events in the future.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police. Non-recent allegations of abuse should be reported to the LADO who will liaise with other agencies. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

All concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) will be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the criteria indicated in the allegations section above. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt.

An adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that does not meet the expectation in the Staff Code of Conduct, including conduct outside of school and does not meet the allegations criteria or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum; examples could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns about a member of staff, a visitor, supply teacher or contractor should be reported immediately to the Headteacher. Where the concern it is about the Headteacher it should be reported to the Chair of the Governing Body. The Headteacher will notify the employer so that any patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.



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All low-level concerns will be recorded by the Headteacher and stored securely and confidentially. These records will be reviewed so that any patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be properly dealt with.

Links with other policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction:

- The Anti-Bullying and Child on child Abuse Strategy Policy
- The Behaviour for Learning Policy
- The ESafety Policy
- The British Values Policy
- The Attendance Policy
- The School Visitor Policy
- The Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Sex and Relationship Policy
- The Staff Code of Conduct
- The Safer Recruitment Policy
- The Whistleblowing Policy
- The Equalities Policy



Appendix 1 – Dealing with Disclosures: Guidance for All Staff

Reminder of our shared objectives:

- All Enfield County School for Girls staff share the objective of keeping children and young people safe:
 - by seeking to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning; and
 - by identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm; and take appropriate action to make sure that they are safe both at home and at school

If a student discloses to you always:

- Find a quiet place to talk where you will not be interrupted
- Make it clear from the start that you are unable to maintain confidentiality and that you have no choice but to pass on any information that causes concern
- Reassure the student
- Listen but do not pressurise
- Ascertain the facts – who? what? where? when? how? Do not ask leading questions. Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court. Instead ask open questions like "Anything else to tell me?" or "Could you explain that to me".
- Be objective in your recording; state facts, write down exactly what was said to you and anything you may have observed. Distinguish clearly between fact and opinion and refrain from using your own interpretation and assumptions
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any marks/bruising if applicable
- Let the child know you are pleased they have told someone
- Tell the child you believe them
- Tell the child you will have to involve others to ensure the child's safety in the future. Tell the child who needs to be involved and why
- Offer on-going support and that you will do your best to protect the child
- Follow our school's policy of reporting to the Designated Safeguard Lead or Deputy immediately
- Having dealt with suspected Child Protection concerns which can be distressing, it is often helpful to talk to a colleague such as a Child Protection Designated Lead about your feelings.



Appendix 2 – Definitions and Indications of Abuse

The following indications of abuse, neglect and exploitation are taken from the NSPCC's knowledge and information service (www.nspcc.org.uk)

What is child abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention. Children may be abused by:

- family members
- friends or peers
- people working or volunteering in organisational, community or religious settings
- any person they know
- by strangers
- online

Children suffering abuse often experience more than one type of abuse. The abuse usually happens over a period time, rather than being a single, isolated incident. Increasingly, abuse can happen online.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It is also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they do not need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

Signs of physical abuse:

- bruises – anywhere on the body, clusters of bruises, finger marks or marks made by objects
- Cuts or lacerations
- large oval-shaped bite marks
- any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (such as bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. If a child is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not match the injury, this should be investigated. It is also concerning if a parent or carer delays seeking medical help for a child who has been injured.



Neglect

Neglect is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent's or carer's failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter
- supervise a child or to leave them with unsuitable carers or expose them to unsuitable company
- keep a child safe from harm or danger
- make sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- make sure the child receives a suitable education
- meet the child's basic emotional needs – parents may ignore their children and not respond to them if they are either happy or sad - this is known as emotional neglect. Neglect is the most common type of child abuse; it often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

Signs of neglect:

- children who appear hungry - they may come to school without lunch money or even try to steal food
- children who appear dirty or smell and whose clothes are unwashed or inadequate for the weather conditions
- children who are left alone or unsupervised
- children who fail to thrive or who have untreated injuries, health or dental problems
- children with poor language, communication or social skills for their stage of development
- children who live in an unsuitable home environment, for example the house is very dirty and unsafe, perhaps with evidence of substance misuse or violence
- children who have taken on the role of carer for other family members without the support and/or knowledge of others

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent and over time it severely damages a child's emotional health and development. It involves:

- humiliating, putting down or constantly criticising a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking or degrading a child
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child
- trying to control a child's life and not recognising their individuality
- not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- manipulating a child



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- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as drug taking, heavy drinking or domestic abuse
- persistently ignoring or leaving out a child
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- never saying anything kind, positive or encouraging to a child or failing to praise their achievements

The signs of emotional abuse

There are not usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot signs in a child's actions or emotions. It is important to remember that some children are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect for their age
- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends
- fear making mistakes
- fear their parent being approached regarding their behaviour or progress
- self-harm.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It does not necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. Abuse can also happen online. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in any type of sexual activity
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- voyeurism, including 'up-skirting' by taking photographs under a girl or woman's skirt



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Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online
- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them. Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Signs of sexual abuse

Physical signs may be:

- Injuries in private areas
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- pregnancy

Changes in the child's mood or behaviour may also cause concern. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people. In particular, the child may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.

For example:

- they could use sexual language or know things about sex that you wouldn't expect them to
- a child might become sexually active at a young age
- a young person may become promiscuous or unsafe in relationships

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

Young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and do not understand that they are being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what is



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happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gang.

Child sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

The signs of child sexual exploitation:

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour. Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- go missing from home, care or education
- be involved in abusive relationships, appearing intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hang out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- be involved in petty crime such as shoplifting
- have access to drugs and alcohol
- have new things such as clothes and mobile phones which they can't or won't explain
- have unexplained physical injuries.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Children and young people who develop harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) harm themselves and others. HSB can include:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases
- inappropriate touching
- using sexual violence or threats
- sexual encounters with other children or adults.

Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than a 2 year difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other isn't. Children with SEND may be especially vulnerable to harmful sexual behaviour and exploitation from their peers.



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Signs of harmful sexual behaviour:

It is normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children also develop at different rates and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

If an adult is unsure whether a child's sexual behaviour is healthy, Brook provides a traffic light tool. The traffic light system is used to describe healthy (green) sexual behaviours, potentially unhealthy (amber) sexual behaviours and unhealthy (red) sexual behaviours (see below).

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or were in an intimate relationship. There are many different types of abusive behaviours that can occur within intimate relationships, including emotional, sexual, financial, psychological and physical abuse. Domestic abuse can be underpinned by an ongoing pattern of psychologically abusive behaviour (coercive control) that is used by one partner to control or intimidate the other partner.

In situations of domestic abuse, both males and females can be abused or be abusers. Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship regardless of age, sexuality, gender identity, race or religious identity. Research by the NSPCC has indicated that many young people experience domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (Barter, 2009). The UK's cross-government definition of domestic abuse also covers relationships between young people aged 16 and 17 (Home Office, 2013).

Exposing children to domestic abuse between parents and carers is considered child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. The developmental and behavioural impact of witnessing domestic abuse is similar to experiencing direct abuse; furthermore, children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

The signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around. Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- become aggressive
- display anti-social behaviour
- suffer from depression or anxiety
- not achieve as well at school – this can be due to the disruptive atmosphere at home or moving to and from refuges



Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting. The age at which FGM is carried out varies; It may be carried out when a girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy (Home Office et al, 2016). Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM, however, FGM is child abuse and is highly dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It does not enhance fertility and it does not make childbirth safer. FGM is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

The signs of female genital mutilation

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what is going to happen however she might talk about:

- a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- a relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or to get ready for marriage
- a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- missing school repeatedly or running away from home.

A girl who has had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- get distressed at certain topics in school

Statutory reporting requirements: All regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales must report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s to the police (Home Office, 2016).

References/information

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>

https://legacy.brook.org.uk/brook_tools/traffic/index.html?syn_partner=