



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



RGS

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School



NAMED PERSONNEL WITH DESIGNATED RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING:

ACADEMIC YEAR	DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	NOMINATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR	CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
2022-23	Sarah Longville	Naomi McGough Karen Wall	Muzlifah Haniffa	Alan Fletcher

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1. PURPOSE AND AIMS

1.1 This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

1.2 The purpose of the Royal Grammar School's (RGS) safeguarding and child protection policy is to ensure every child who is a registered student at our school is safe and protected from harm. The school undertakes to always act in the best interests of the child. This means we will always work to:

- Protect children and young people from maltreatment;
- prevent impairment of our children's and young people's physical, emotional and mental health or development;
- ensure that children and young people at our school grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- undertake that role so as to enable children and young people to have the best outcomes.

1.3 RGS fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are students at our school. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support. This policy gives clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students.

1.4 We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from school or who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. Pastoral leaders will regularly liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to discuss all persistently absent students and those who go missing to identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation and to ensure that appropriate safeguarding responses have been put in place to reduce the risk of future harm.

1.5 Prior to implementing this policy, a range of factors are considered to help us identify and focus on the key issues for our school and community. To achieve this, we review our referrals, causes for concern, considered local context and local issues. In addition, we discuss and develop our key priorities as a leadership team and with the Governing Body as well as our external safeguarding advisors, Clennell Education Services.

2. OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

2.1 The child's welfare is of paramount importance. RGS seeks to establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children should be able to talk freely to any member of staff at school if they are worried or concerned about something.

2.2 We recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, so our staff know how important it is to build trusted relationships with our students which can facilitate communication.

2.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, **all practitioners** should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, **what is in the best interest of the child**. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, promote children's welfare, and prevent concerns from escalating.

ALL STAFF ARE ADVISED TO MAINTAIN AN ATTITUDE OF 'IT COULD HAPPEN HERE' WHERE SAFEGUARDING IS CONCERNED.

When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the *best interests* of the child.

2.4 All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognize indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and

report this information. Staff and others will not make promises of confidentiality to any child and will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

2.5 Throughout our curriculum we provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. This is extended to include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills. The PSHE curriculum in the Junior and Senior schools incorporates a number of opportunities for students to learn, in an age appropriate manner, how they can stay safe and report concerns about themselves or others. These topics are regularly revisited both formally through PSHE/RSE lessons and informally through form and tutor time, assemblies and more specialised sessions often delivered by visiting speakers or off-timetable Year group activities. In the Sixth Form the *Plus Programme* seeks to widen understanding of the wider world and prepare our students for independent living.

3. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK & SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

3.1 This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children', DfE (2018)
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2022)
- Local safeguarding Board Partnerships procedures
- Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (February 2022)
- 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused', DfE (March 2015)
- 'Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners', DfE (March 2015)
- 'The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers', DfE (2015)
- 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information', Home Office (October 2015)
- The Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

3.2 At all times we work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), Newcastle Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and Local Safeguarding Partners' Procedures.

Details of the regional Safeguarding Partners are in Appendices O and P.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)	Sarah Longville	s.longville@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk
DEPUTY DSLS	Naomi McGough Karen Wall	n.mcgough@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk k.wall@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk
HEAD TEACHER	Geoffrey Stanford	hm@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk
NAMED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR	Muzlifah Haniffa	c.black@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	Alan Fletcher	c.black@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

4.1 It is the responsibility of **EVERY** member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our school to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of all of the students at this school. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

THE GOVERNING BODY

4.2 The Governing Body is accountable for ensuring the effectiveness of this policy and our compliance with it. Although the Governing Body takes collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students, there is a named governor who champions safeguarding within the school.

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to ensure staff are supported to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities under Part one of KCSIE 2022, and that there is a whole school approach to safeguarding, ensuring safeguarding underpins all aspects of process and policy.

Our Governing Body ensures that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated

4.3 The Governing Body will ensure that:

- The safeguarding policy is in place, is reviewed annually and out-dated references are removed. It is available publicly via the school website and has been written in line with Local Authority guidance and the requirements of the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership's policies and procedures;
- The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018);
- A senior member of staff from the leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that there are deputy DSL(s) who are appropriately trained to deal with any issues in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). There will always be cover for this role;
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy and the [STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY](#);
- All staff undertake appropriate child protection training that is updated regularly, at least annually;
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with statutory guidance;
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) DfE (2022);
- They remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.

4.4 The Governing Body receive a termly safeguarding update and an annual safeguarding report that records all safeguarding activity, the training that has taken place and will inform the Governing Body how the school meets its statutory requirements.

The Named Safeguarding Governor will also undertake a range of *safeguarding visits* over the year to monitor compliance within the safeguarding agenda.

THE HEAD TEACHER

4.5 The Head is responsible for:

- Identifying a senior member of staff from the leadership team to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
 - Identifying alternative members of staff to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in their absence to ensure there is always cover for the role (Deputy)
-

Designated Safeguarding Leads);

- Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff;
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing procedures;
- Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL), THE DEPUTY DSLs

4.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Deputy Head Pastoral. They are a senior member of staff from the Senior Leadership Team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within our school. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex C of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE (2022)*;

4.7 The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded on CPOMS and given to the DSL.

4.8 During term time, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Should the school move to remote-learning then when permitted a DSL or DDSL will be on-site during school hours. If in *exceptional* circumstances, a DSL is not available on the school site in person, the school ensures that they are available via telephone and any other relevant media. In addition, some Heads of Year have received DSL training.

4.9 The DSL or Deputy will attend child protection conferences and core group meetings.

Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience, our DSL will liaise with Children's Services, the police, and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse to Children's Services, take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children.

4.10 The DSL, their deputies and the SLT should be aware of the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) for when to call the police and what to expect when a report is made.

4.11 The DSL will maintain written records and child protection files ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

4.12 The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members, volunteers and contractors are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction.

4.13 The DSL is responsible for ensuring that online safety is considered as important as other aspects of safeguarding and that policies and approaches to e-safety are updated and relevant to our school and community.

4.14 The Deputy DSLs have the training and authority to act for the DSL in safeguarding students when the DSL is away or unavailable.

4.15 The Deputy DSL based in the Junior School has responsibility for overseeing safeguarding on a day to day basis and will typically be the first person a member of staff in the Junior School will turn to for advice.

4.16 The Deputy DSLs have a responsibility to meet with and discuss safeguarding issues with the DSL. This ensures that information is appropriately shared and that both the DSL and the Deputy DSLs are supported in their daily role.

4.17 The DSL and Deputy DSLs will help to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership team. They will ensure that the staff know who these children are, that they understand their academic progress and attainment, and maintain a culture of high

expectations for this cohort. That they support teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

4.18 The DSL will understand the importance of implementing an appropriate adult when required (PACE Code C 2019)

5. TRAINING AND INDUCTION

5.1 When new staff join the school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, usually through a face-to-face meeting with the DSL or DDSL. They are given a copy of the school's **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**; the **STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY**; Part one or Annex A (as determined by the governors) of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE (2022); KCSIE Annex A (leaders and those who work directly with children); the **ATTENDANCE POLICY** (which includes procedures for children missing from education), The **STUDENT BEHAVIOUR, REWARDS & SANCTIONS POLICY** and details of procedures to report concerns about an adult working with children. Further key documents relating to safeguarding, KCSIE, student behaviour, online safety and responding to specific issues are signposted to all new staff as part of their induction and are also available in the staff handbook. All staff are expected to read these key documents and fully **UNDERSTAND** their responsibility. They will also be provided with details of the school's recording procedures.

5.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will receive safeguarding training during their induction period, usually on their first day at school but always within the first half term of joining the school. This programme will include information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record and the remit of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies. The training will also include information about whistle-blowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children and low-level concerns reporting. All new staff will receive online safety training as part of their induction programme.

5.3 In addition to the safeguarding induction, the school ensures that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE (2022). In order to achieve this:

- All members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training on an annual basis and the impact of this training is evaluated through informal feedback, appraisal discussion and changes to working practices;
- All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, weekly pastoral meetings and twilight training), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively;
- All staff members are trained on how to manage a report of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and are aware that the former DfE 2017 guidance of '[Sexual Violence & Sexual Harm between children in schools & colleges](#)' is now Part Five of KCSIE 2022.
- At least one additional twilight training session for staff is allocated to specific aspects of safeguarding in order to improve understanding and practice. This session is often delivered by an outside specialist.
- Our staff safeguarding training should be building on our whole school approach to safeguarding which sees safeguarding as an integral part of wider staff training and curriculum planning

5.4 All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers to our school will be given a set of our safeguarding procedures; they will be informed of who our DSL and alternative staff members are and what the recording and reporting system is and they usually meet the DSL or one of their deputies.

5.5 The DSL, the Deputy DSLs and any other senior member of staff who may be in a position of attending child protection conferences or core groups will attend appropriate training bi-annually. In addition to formal training, the DSL will ensure that they update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

5.6 The Governing Body also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children at our school. Our governing body have a strategic leadership responsibility for our school's safeguarding arrangements. They must ensure we comply with our duties and our policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times.

5.7 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance, Annex B of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (2022) provides links to guidance on specific safeguarding issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and Violence, and Youth produced sexual imagery (known as sexting) and recently added cybercrime and child abduction. In addition, throughout the school year we will brief staff on any key changes to Part one of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (2022).

6. SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff are aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, excessive gambling and online presence put children in danger.

All staff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse (see Annex H **CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES** which includes Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse between children and in school, Section 13) and the school's documents: **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY** and **ANTI-CYBERBULLYING POLICY**.

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools and colleges can be found on the TES, and the NSPCC websites. Staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites:

*(For further information see appendix C-N)
(Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022)*

Sexual Violence & Harassment between children in schools and colleges (now Part Five of KCSIE 2022)

Children missing education	Faith based abuse	Missing Children & Adults
Child missing from home or care	Female genital mutilation (FGM)	Private Fostering
Child criminal exploitation (CCE) & County Lines	Forced Marriage	Preventing Radicalisation
Bullying including cyberbullying	Gangs and Youth Violence	Sexting
Domestic abuse	Gender-based violence	Relationship Abuse
Drugs	Hate	Trafficking and Modern Slavery
Fabricated or induced illness	Mental Health	Upskirting

CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

RGS has students from age 7 to age 18, from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Geographically, our catchment covers a large area, with many students living in the urban areas of the Tyneside conurbation, but also in settlements across rural Northumberland and Durham. It is important that we maintain relationships with the relevant local safeguarding teams, such as the police or local safeguarding hubs, to keep abreast of local safeguarding concerns that may put our students at risk. We also recognize that being an academically selective, fee-paying school, can present specific contextual safeguarding concerns. For example, the demographic of our parents may mean that we have a greater proportion of students who may have access to a higher than average amount of disposable income, or may be at home without supervision at times when their parents are working. We may also have a higher proportion of students under high levels of pressure and expectation from their parents, which may have an impact on student mental health. We also have a large catchment area, with children travelling to school using a variety of means. We have a diverse socio-economic and racial demographic.

EXTRA-FAMILIAL AND INTRA-FAMILIAL HARMS

Extra-familial harm: Harm that occurs to children outside of their family and often occurs during adolescence, including the witnessing ill-treatment of others. They may take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation

Intra-familial harm: Harm that occurs within the family domain, and the need to support siblings of those who have been harmed.

RAISING AWARENESS IN STUDENTS

RGS recognises that we play a crucial role in preventative education. The curriculum is planned in such a way that there are opportunities to educate students, in an age-appropriate way, about safeguarding issues which place them at risk if harm, including online dangers.

We adopt a whole-school values-based approach to prepare our students for life in modern Britain, which creates a culture of zero tolerance for of prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour, and sexual violence/harassment.

Throughout their time at school, students are taught through formal spiral curriculum of PSHE/RSE lessons, in addition to aspects of other subjects' curriculum, information in the student planner, informal discussion in lessons and form time, in assemblies, through drop-down "wellbeing days" and through visiting speakers.

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive community and are committed to promoting British values. We promote an ethos of openness where students can feel they can raise concerns or worries safely. For example, we offer more confidential channels via the counsellors and medical staff, or via the Tootoot app or Senso software on school-issued devices.

All staff are aware that they may be perceived as the "safe adult" with whom a young person may share their concern or worry, and we promote all children and young people to speak to whoever they feel most comfortable.

We also value the importance and impact of peer support, encouraging students to take on leadership roles and model the values that we promote at RGS. Our Senior Prefects, Form Prefects and Junior School prefects all assume a peer supporting role, alongside our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and wellbeing peer supporters. They receive training on safeguarding processes and listening skills, and make themselves available as a point of contact for students to share any worries or concerns.

7. PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING CONCERNS

(WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN 2018)

All staff follow the School's procedures which are consistent with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of the School staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind, reassure the student that they are being taken seriously and they will be supported and kept safe.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEED OF ADDITIONAL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns about a student to an appropriate pastoral leader. In the Junior School, this may be the class teacher and/or Assistant Head Pastoral (DDSL). In the Senior School, this may be the form supervisor, Head of Year or Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL). All concerns are logged on the School's CPOMS system, to which every member of staff has appropriate access. Staff are regularly reminded that it is the sharing of information which is most likely to alert pastoral staff in good time to the needs of children and young people, enabling the School to implement additional support, including school based early help strategies, as needed.

Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of students will be recorded and where further additional intervention is needed, an alert will be sent to the DSL or Head of Pastoral in the Junior School (or another senior member of staff in the absence of the designated person) prior to any discussion with parents.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MAY BE SUFFERING SIGNIFICANT HARM

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, students, parents/carers and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust, can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns. We aim to foster a safeguarding culture which welcomes and facilitates all stakeholders in our community to share safeguarding concerns, no matter how small.

Adults and older students e.g. prefects, are encouraged to report concerns, however small, at the earliest opportunity. There is an understanding that early reporting helps to build a picture of the child, may prevent abuse, enable access to Early Help or to put in place a TAC/TAF/CAF assessment.

We are also mindful that some students may be more vulnerable due to a SEN or disability, certain health conditions, or difficult home circumstances (e.g. the "toxic trio" of mental health, domestic abuse and substance abuse within the home environment or a parental offending) and that they may also be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse or sexual or criminal exploitation.

DEFINITIONS

As in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a **CHILD** is anyone who has not yet reached his/her 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 and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Physical Abuse 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.

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional Abuse is 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 conveying to children 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 the 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect is 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:

- Provide adequate food and clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caretakers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Emotional unfulfillment of a child's basic emotional needs

STAFF MUST IMMEDIATELY REPORT:

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way that is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play.
- Any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious.
- Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play).
- Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment.
- Any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect.
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance.
- Any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person.
- Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present).

Staff are also encouraged actively to consider children who might present as vulnerable (see appendix C).

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

Disclosures or information may be received from students, parents or other members of the public. The School recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. It is at the discretion of the DSL/DDSL as to whether the parents/carers would be informed – weighing up what is in the best interests of the child and/or the wider safeguarding culture of the school.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

PRINCIPLES

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in order that they can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff will:

- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm.
- Try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of school staff.
- Clarify the information.
- Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?'
- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise.
- Not express feelings or judgments regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child.
- Explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the designated safeguarding lead.
- Reassure and support the person as far as possible.
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told.
- Explain what will happen next and that the person will be involved as appropriate.
- Notify the DSL as soon as reasonably possible, and record their actions either through email to the DSL or preferably by logging a concern on CPOMS.

7.1 The Royal Grammar School adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with local threshold guidance including considering the appropriateness of Early Help.

7.2 Every member of staff including volunteers working with children at our school are advised to maintain an attitude of '**IT COULD HAPPEN HERE**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy.

7.3 All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

7.4 It is **NOT** the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

7.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the School who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the alternative designated person. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

7.6 All concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay and recorded in CPOMS or followed up with an email to the DSL or in writing using the agreed procedures and record form (see appendix P).

7.7 Following receipt of any information that raises concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children's Services as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented on CPOMS.

7.8 All referrals will be made in line with Local Children's Services procedures remembering that in our school we have students from a number of local authority areas.

7.9 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Children's Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Head Teacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

7.10 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their alternative and the Head Teacher are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety;
- a crime may have been committed.

7.11 Any member of staff, who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy, should raise their concerns with the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point then they should contact Children's Services directly with their concerns. See Appendix N/O.

7.12 The School recognises that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. **This Is Called Child on Child Abuse.**

See Annex H for policy and procedures, and Annex I for Harmful Sexual Behaviour.

We have a **zero-tolerance approach to abuse**, and it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" or "kids being kids" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but not be limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults, upskirting, sexting and initiation/hazing type rituals. Child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment can happen in or outside of school as well as online and every member of staff need to adopt an "it could happen here" approach.

Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse, as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. All reports will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and the same safeguarding children procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm; staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to child-on-child abuse. We must ensure that the victims are supported throughout, acknowledging that how we respond to reports of child-on-child abuse will impact the confidence of other students to report.

See Annex H for procedures to follow reports of child on child abuse.

7.13 Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in staff training. The SENCO is always available to give further advice in this area. These additional barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

7.14 Staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA, they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. KCSIE 2022 has a link to The Right to Choose: government guidance on forced marriage.

7.15 Where FGM has taken place, there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers since 31st October 2015. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: ['Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information'](#) (October 2015) (see appendix D).

7.16 We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. We ensure that:

- Through training, staff, volunteers and governors have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in school and how to respond when concerns arise.
- There are systems in place for keeping students safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our school by using effective filtering and usage policies.
- The DSL has received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within our school for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- The DSL will make referrals in accordance with Local Channel procedures and will represent our school at Channel meetings as required.
- Through our curriculum, we will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.
- We recognise that our students could be at risk from or involved in serious violent crime, for example as the result of membership of a gang. Where students are have unusual and increased patterns of absence from school, where there is a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries, unexplained gifts or new possessions the staff are aware that they need to consider the possibility that a child may have been approached by or involved with individuals associated with criminal networks.

In such circumstances the School will refer to Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines and Home Office guidelines "Preventing youth violence and gang involvement", "Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance" and the Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals.

7.17 We recognise the potential heightened risk of experiencing child on child abuse for LGBTQ+ children and/or those that are perceived to be. LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the statutory relationships education/relationships and sex education curriculum throughout our school, which is an important part of ensuring we have a culture in our school that is inclusive and does not tolerate any form of prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour. To be a source of support for our students we have LGBTQ+ peer supporters, a vibrant Pride Soc, and staff who champion LGBTQ+ rights.

8. RECORDING AND INFORMATION SHARING

8.1 If staff are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child at our school they will record their concern by reporting it to the DSL and by logging information on the School's CPOMS system (or email to the DSL if they cannot access CPOMS).

8.2 Any information recorded is kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet or from September 2018 on CPOMS, and not with the child's academic file. These files will be the responsibility of the DSL and only accessible to the DSL and DDSs. Child protection information will only be shared within school on the basis of 'need to know in the child's

interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

8.3 Child protection information will only be kept in the file, or CPOMS *Child Protection* category from September 2018, and this file will be kept up to date. Records of concern, copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored here. Where paper safeguarding files were used, they included; a chronology, key information front cover and will record significant events in the child's life.

8.4 When a child leaves our school, the DSL will make contact with the DSL at the new school and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving school/college in an appropriately agreed manner, within five working days for an in-year transfer, or within the first five working days of the start of a new term. Where a parent elects to remove their child from the School roll to home educate, the School will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the Local Authority.

When storing and transferring data, the School takes care to administer personal data in compliance with GDPR procedures. When asked for personal data, the School will make every effort to confirm the identity of the person requesting information for example, asking to return a call to a specific number or checking ID.

9. WORKING WITH PARENTS & CARERS

9.1 RGS is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

9.2 When new students join the School, parents and carers will be informed that we have a child protection & safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Children's Services.

9.3 We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm. Our Privacy Notice is available on our website for all to access, and details when and how we may share the children's data.

9.4 We seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the School has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to Children's Services in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

9.5 In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the School requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- emergency contact details (if different from above) to ensure we have two points of contact for each child;
- full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).

The School will retain this information on the student file. The School will only share information about students with adults who have parental responsibility for a student or where a parent has given permission and the School has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

10. CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

10.1 Children's Services will convene a Child Protection conference once a child protection enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been undertaken and the child is

judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm. A review conference will take place once a child has been made the subject of a Child Protection Plan in order to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk.

10.2 Staff members may be asked to attend a child protection conference or core group meetings on behalf of the School in respect of individual children. Usually, the person representing the School at these meetings will be the DSL. 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.

10.3 All reports for child protection conferences will be prepared in advance using the guidance and template report. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents before the conference as appropriate and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development and the child's presentation at school. In order to complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the child in school.

10.4 Clearly child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. 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 Plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

11. SAFER RECRUITMENT

11.1 The School will ensure that the Head Teacher, Director of Finance and Operations, HR Manager and at least one other member of the Senior Leadership Team have completed appropriate safer recruitment training. At all times the Head Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE (2022).

11.2 RGS uses a robust recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates. We require evidence of original academic certificates. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will only accept a CV if it is accompanied alongside a full application form. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children.

Following the requirements of KCSIE 2022, we will undertake online searches of the public domain of all short-listed candidates (see our [SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY](#)). This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

11.3 We maintain a Single Central Register (SCR) of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. We also use the SCR to record latest safeguarding training.

11.4 In accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2022) we recognise the broader range of behaviour of an adult, which may indicate a person poses, or might pose, a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children. This is more commonly known as the 'harm test': a person has 'behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children' (para 211 KCSIE 2022), known as *transferrable risk*.

11.5 For more detailed information on safer recruitment procedures see our [SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY](#).

12. SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

12.1 All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

12.2 All employed staff are provided with a copy of the school's [STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY](#) at induction. They will be expected to know the school's Staff behaviour policy and carry out their duties in accordance with this advice. There will be occasion when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident, or is hurt, or is in a

situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for positive handling as outlined in the *STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY* must be adhered to.

12.3 If staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors or parent helpers (who have completed the DBS checks) are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They should avoid working on their own with students out of the usual school working hours. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open whenever practicable.

12.4 There are some circumstances where staff are engaged in one-to-one teaching or support for example, peripatetic music teachers (known as VMTs), sports coaches, counsellors and medical staff. In these circumstances staff are given added guidance as part of their induction in order to maintain appropriate safeguards including, but not limited to:

- Working in a room with clear glass in the door and making sure visibility is not masked;
- making and adhering to a published timetable of appointments;
- consistency of professional boundaries such as asking students if they would prefer someone with them;
- seeking help if needed;
- logging meetings with students with the Deputy Head Pastoral as indicated in the Staff Behaviour Policy.

12.5 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' (October 2015). 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.

13. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

13.1 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 distressing and difficult for all concerned. Many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. See *MANAGING ALLEGATIONS POLICY, AND LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY*

13.2 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in the *local procedures* and Part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2022) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Designated Officer (LADO), Melanie Scott. The LADO will be contacted to request a consultation or to make a referral.

13.3 If an allegation is made or information is received about any adult who works in or for school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the DSL or Head immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff, contractors and volunteers, even though they are not directly employed by the school (KCSIE 2022,). Termination of their working arrangements should not occur without finding out the facts and liaising with the Governing body, LADO and supply agency to determine whether it is appropriate to suspend or redeploy the supply teacher to another part of the school whilst investigating the allegation, and work together to determine a suitable outcome.

Should an allegation be made against the Head Teacher, this should be reported to the Chair of Governors without informing the Head Teacher. In the event that the Chair of Governors is not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Head Teacher or the Vice Chair of Governors.

13.4 The Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will seek immediate advice from the LADO and at least within one working day. No member of staff or the Governing Body will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO, including whether or not to suspend the individual against whom the allegation has been made. All conversations with the LADO will be recorded in writing and any conversations with the member of staff, children or families concerned agreed beforehand.

13.5 The School is mindful of need to maintain confidentiality and that it has a duty to guard against unwanted publicity regarding the allegation. Therefore, until an accused person is charged with an offence or the DfE/TRA have published information about the case, only key members of staff will be aware of the allegation and it will not be discussed with the staff in general, parents or students. However, the School needs to be mindful that students may feel they want to disclose further information and should feel able to do so.

13.6 Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors should contact the LADO directly. Further national guidance can be found at: [Advice on whistleblowing](#). [THE NSPCC WHISTLEBLOWING HELPLINE](#) is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

13.7 The School has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

NB. This includes staff who resign, volunteers who cease to work, student teachers, supply teachers and contractors. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR Manager. Compromise agreements will not prevent a referral to the DBS.

13.8 The School also has a duty to make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed or resigned due to unacceptable professional conduct, conduct which may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction for relevant offence. In such cases a prohibition order may be appropriate and the School will refer to the guidance on the TRA website when considering the referral.

14. RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that students at our school are appropriately safeguarded, the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- RGS Ethos
- Staff behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Anti-cyberbullying policy
- Safer recruitment policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Attendance policy
- Supervision policy
- E-safety policy
- Health and safety policy
- SEN policy
- Medical policy
- First Aid
- Educational visits
- Data protection
- Managing Allegations Policy
- Low-level Concerns Policy
- Drugs policy
- Complaints policy
- PSHE scheme of work
- Supervision policy
- Supporting emotional wellbeing and mental health policy
- Procedure for responding to an incident of sexting

15. THE STUDENT VOICE

15.1 The RGS have a range of reporting systems for students to share concerns. All students are encouraged and reminded that any adult member of staff can be regarded as a trusted adult and someone they can feel they can talk to should they need to.

15.2 We subscribe to **Tootoot** which is an online tool that students can use to report anonymously or not any issues they wish to. All students from Y7 upwards are given their own log-in in the Autumn term, and the profile of Tootoot is kept high using displays around the school, the Student Hub, and assemblies. Most of our students will be in receipt of a school device on which they have access to Senso, which provides a tool to allow users to anonymously report a concern about themselves or someone else, with the ability to take screenshots if appropriate.

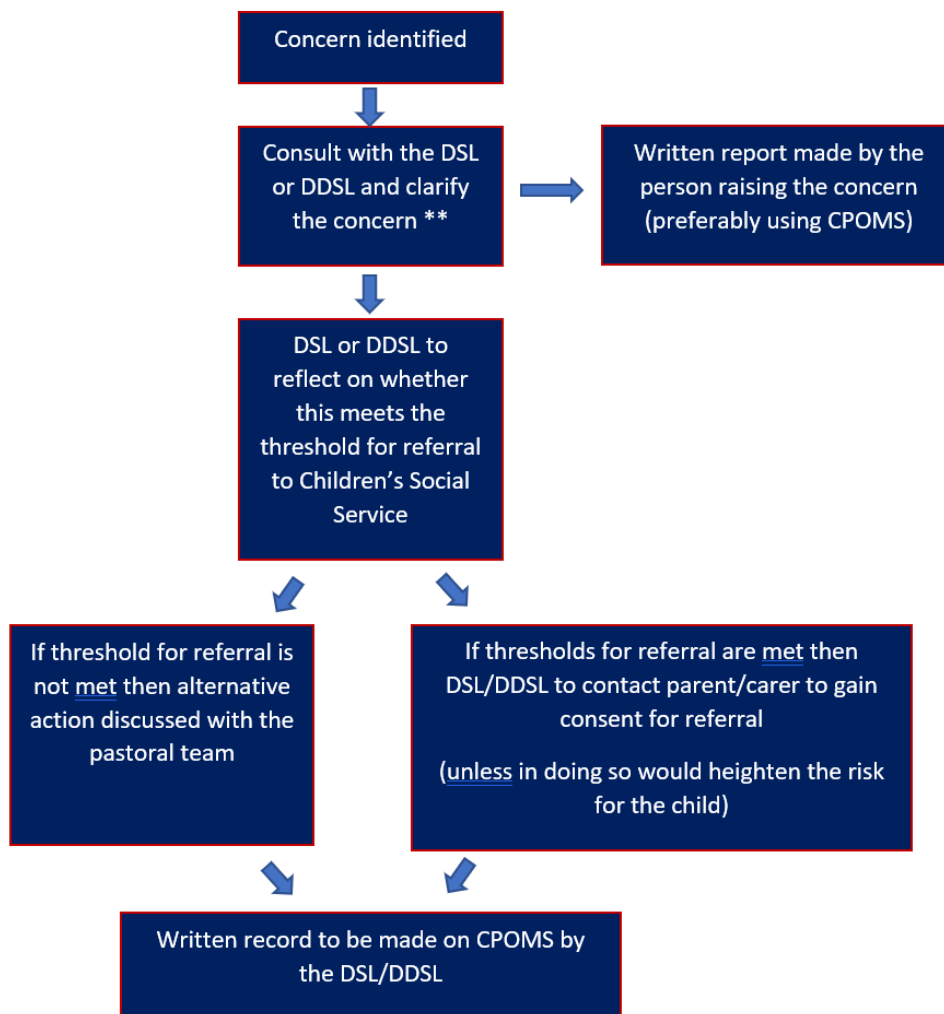
15.3 The student planners have guidance of how to report a concern and who students can turn to. To help facilitate conversations, all students also have access to Office 365 and are able to Team chat message or email directly any adult member of staff.

15.4 All students in the Junior School and Y7-11 have a prefect assigned to their form who will have received some peer-support training, which includes basic counselling skills and safeguarding knowledge. They can be seen as a trusted peer supporter to whom students can turn. At RGS our peer supporters include a team of anti-bullying ambassadors and Pride Soc members who can offer an alternative point of support for our students.

15.5 All students have access to our school counsellors or nurses, who can offer a more confidential point of support for students to turn to.

APPENDIX A – SUSPECTED CHILD AT RISK WHAT ACTION TO TAKE

Channels of communication should be quick and clear:



| Any member of staff who is unhappy with the joint decision made with the Designated Safeguarding Lead can consult with the Headteacher/Chair of Governors or seek advice from key staff within the Local Authority.

APPENDIX B: SAFEGUARDING INDUCTION SHEET

(FOR NEW OR SUPPLY STAFF AND REGULAR VISITORS OR VOLUNTEERS)

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and at our school we take this responsibility seriously.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person in our school, you must share this information immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the alternative post holders.

Do not think that your worry is insignificant if it is about hygiene, appearance or behaviour – we would rather you told us as we would rather know about something that appears small than miss a worrying situation.

If you think the matter is very serious and may be related to child protection, for example, physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, you must find one of the designated professionals detailed below and follow up with a written record of your concern via a CPOMS log or email.

If you are unable to locate one of the designated professionals ask a member of the school office staff to find them and to ask them to speak with you immediately about a confidential and urgent matter.

Any allegation concerning a member of staff, a child's parent or carer or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the DSL or Head Teacher. If an allegation is made about the Head Teacher you should pass this information to the Chair of the Governing Body. Alternatively, you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer on Tel: 0191 277 4636. **NSPCC WHISTLEBLOWING HELPLINE** is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

THE PEOPLE YOU SHOULD TALK TO IN SCHOOL ARE:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):	Sarah Longville
Location of office:	Heads of Year Office
Contact Number:	Ext 220
Alternative Designated Lead:	Naomi McGough/Karen Wall
Location of office:	Sixth Form Centre/Brandling House
Contact Numbers:	Ext 270 / 293
Head Teacher:	Geoffrey Stanford
Contact Number:	Ext 256

AT RGS WE STRIVE TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF ALL OF OUR CHILDREN.

APPENDIX C – SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

VULNERABILITY

Alongside the specific safeguarding issues listed below, staff should consider children who may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and may require early help.

Factors that can increase vulnerabilities can include:

- any children with additional needs including;
- children with Special Educational Needs/Disabled children (SEND);
- children facing housing issues such as frequent moves and homelessness;
- those living in families with chaotic lifestyles;
- those living in families who experience domestic abuse
- families with increased stress, parental mental health and/or drug and alcohol dependency;
- those children living elsewhere, with friends, relatives, are in care or are leaving care;
- Asylum Seekers/Refugees;
- Those vulnerable to discrimination on the basis of their sexuality, race, religion, ethnicity or disability;
- Children at risk from neglect or abuse including specific issues such as FGM, CSE, forced marriage, radicalisation and living in households with domestic abuse;
- Children with communication difficulties;
- Children without adequate parenting/supervision which could lead to abuse, risk-related behaviour and sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list but merely an example of vulnerabilities that staff must consider when identifying safeguarding concerns.

For more information on specific safeguarding issues please refer to Part 1 & annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

APPENDIX C1 – CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

SIGNS INCLUDE:

- Underage sexual activity
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- Repeated sexually transmitted infections
- In girls, repeated pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile phone
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile phone) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- Changes in the way they dress
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- Seen at known places of concern
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Contact with known perpetrators
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- Recruiting other young people into exploitative situations
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress)
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Getting involved in crime/police involvement, police records
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

APPENDIX C2 – CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION & COUNTY LINES

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines. Criminal networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for purposes of transporting drugs. A referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county line exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect a vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be linked to gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. (KCSIE 2022)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Persistently going missing from home or school
- Being found out of area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phone
- Excessive receipt of calls and text messages
- Relationships with older controlling individuals
- Associated with gangs
- Leaving home or care without explanation
- Suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Significant decline in school performance
- Significant changes in emotional wellbeing.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[County Lines Toolkit For Professionals | The Children's Society \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-issues-and-challenges/county-lines)

[Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance \(filesusr.com\)](https://filesusr.com/)

APPENDIX C3 - SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

- increased absence from school
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school 15
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy. Staff should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#). The [Youth Endowment Fund \(YEF\) Toolkit](#) sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence

APPENDIX D – BELIEF AND FAITH RELATED ABUSE

D1: FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

WHAT IS FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 TYPES OF PROCEDURE:

Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Clitoridectomy: partial/total removal of clitoris	Excision: partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora	Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia	All other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

WHY IS IT CARRIED OUT?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman/rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean/hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier.

IS FGM LEGAL?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is **ILLEGAL** in most countries including the UK.

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)

- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage.

SIGNS THAT MAY INDICATE A CHILD HAS UNDERGONE FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Disclosure.

THE 'ONE CHANCE' RULE:

As with Forced Marriage, there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings/schools/colleges take action **WITHOUT DELAY**. As KCSIE now states:

'Under section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by sect 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those falling to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions'

FURTHER INFORMATION:

https://0fb80032-034f-41f6-b700-09747b605a59.filesusr.com/ugd/275b7d_9827dc1c253241a3aa12eb6ff3cc7a00.pdf

www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation

https://0fb80032-034f-41f6-b700-09747b605a59.filesusr.com/ugd/275b7d_609e5470bf6d4e949f358f3e19e3d172.pdf

D2: SO - CALLED 'HONOUR - BASED' ABUSE

So-called 'honour-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including:

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- Breast ironing

Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

D3: FORCED MARRIAGE

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. (*KCSIE 2022*)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Students may appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem.
- They may have mental health disorders and display behaviours such as self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia.
- Sometimes they may come to the attention of the police having been discovered shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol.
- Often students' symptoms can be exacerbated in the periods leading up to the holiday season.
- Students may present with a sudden decline in their performance, aspirations or motivation.
- They may be subject to excessive restrictions and control at home.
- Some students may not be allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after-school activities.
- Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college, and even during lunch breaks.
- Some students may stop attending school or college.
- Their homework is incomplete or appears rushed. This may be the result of being actively discouraged from doing it by family members.
- Students may do their homework late at night, which frequently shows in school because they are lethargic, unable to concentrate and have a general appearance of tiredness.

- Professionals being told that the student is out of the country.
- There are occasions when older siblings (usually brothers) and cousins keep a close eye on girls to make sure that they do not meet anyone or talk to friends.
- Conflict between the student and their parents about whether the student will be allowed to continue their education.
- Family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early.

HOW EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS CAN HELP:

- Signposting, where appropriate, to forced marriage materials or where further support and advice can be accessed.
- Displaying relevant information e.g. details of the NSPCC Helpline, Child Line, and appropriate local and national support groups on forced marriage.
- Ensuring that a private telephone is made available should students need to seek advice discreetly.
- Educating teachers, lecturers and other staff about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the presenting symptoms – appropriate training should be included in continuing professional development (CPD).
- Referring students to an Education Welfare Officer, Pastoral Tutor, Learning Mentor or School Counsellor as appropriate.
- Encouraging young people to access appropriate advice, information and support.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/the-right-to-choose)

APPENDIX E – RADICALISATION

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 was published on 12th March 2015. Section 26 of the Act places a duty on schools in England (and Wales) to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This duty applies to all schools, whether publicly-funded or independent, and organisations covered by the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

SCHOOL LEADERS MUST:

- Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism
- Ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with it
- Communicate and promote the importance of the duty
- Ensure staff implement the duty effectively.

OTHER DUTIES ON SCHOOLS INCLUDE:

- Effective partnership working with other local agencies, eg. Safeguarding Partners, police, health, etc.
- Information sharing
- Maintaining appropriate records
- Assessing local risk of extremism (including Far Right extremism)
- Demonstrating they are protecting children
- Developing clear protocols for visiting speakers
- Safeguarding policies that take account of Local Safeguarding Partners' policies and procedures
- Training staff to give them knowledge and confidence
- Ensuring there is robust ICT protocols that filter out extremist materials
- School buildings must not be used to give a platform to extremists.

UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNISING RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES OF RADICALISATION

Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These may include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause **SIGNIFICANT HARM**.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that staff exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS INCLUDE:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession of violent extremist literature
- Behavioural changes
- Advocating violent actions and means

- Association with known extremists
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology.

Newcastle is a safe, diverse and largely tolerant city, but we cannot be complacent. Prevent is part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST and is designed to safeguard vulnerable people and communities from the threat of radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism.

Prevent in Newcastle [referral form](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

[Prevent in Newcastle | Newcastle City Council](#)

Joe Hogan, Prevent Coordinator Tel: 0771 0845366

Gail Forbes, Prevent Education Officer Tel: 07817 549 718

Email: prevent@newcastle.gov.uk

APPENDIX F: PRIVATE FOSTERING

Many people find themselves looking after someone else's child without realising that they may be involved in private fostering. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more it is private fostering.

The Children Act 1989 defines a relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a step parent.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include – Safeguarding Policy for Schools and Education Services - September 2016:

- Children who need alternative care because of parental illness.
- Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours.
- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities.
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children.
- Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents.
- Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

There is a mandatory duty on the School to inform the Local Authority of a Private Fostering Arrangement. The Local Authority has a duty to check that the young person is being properly cared for and that the arrangement is satisfactory.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering

APPENDIX G: CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION:

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including sexual exploitation, FGM, forced marriage or travelling to conflict zones. School staff will be alert to these safeguarding concerns when a student goes missing for an extended period, or on repeat occasions.

The School must notify the Local Authority of any student/student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. The School (regardless of designation) must also notify the Local Authority of any student who is to be deleted from the admission register because s/he:

- Has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system (e.g. home education).
- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the School at which s/he is registered (moved within the city, within the country or moved abroad but failed to notify the School of the change).
- Displaced as a result of a crisis e.g. domestic violence or homelessness.
- Has been certified by the School Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither s/he nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the School after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe s/he will return to the School at the end of that period.
- Has been permanently excluded.

Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered 'missing'. School absences may be a sign of abuse so please ensure you follow your *ATTENDANCE POLICY* and report any concerns you may have.

Further information can be found in 'Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities – September 2016'

www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education

APPENDIX H: CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE POLICY & PROCEDURE:

INTRODUCTION

The Governors, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and all staff and volunteers at The Royal Grammar School are committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse (as defined below) both within and beyond the school.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. Peer-on-peer abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of 'banter' or 'growing up'. All reports of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously.

In particular, we:

- Believe that in order to protect children, all schools should
 - a) be aware of the level and nature of risk to which their students are or may be exposed, and put in place a clear and comprehensive strategy which is tailored to their specific safeguarding context; and
 - b) take a contextual whole-school approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse;
- recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse at a given time, this does not mean it is not happening within the school, and we will remain vigilant and proactive
- recognise our responsibility to ensure that children understand the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them rather than criminalise them
- regard the introduction of this policy as a preventative measure, and do not feel it is acceptable merely to take a reactive approach to child-on-child abuse in response to alleged incidents of it;
- recognise national and increasing concern about this issue, and wish to implement this policy in order to ensure that our students are safe; and
- encourage parents to hold us to account on this issue, so that if their child is feeling unsafe as a result of the behaviour of any of their peers, they should inform the school so that it can ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken in response.

THIS POLICY

- Sets out our strategy for preventing, identifying and appropriately managing child-on-child abuse. It is the product of a comprehensive consultation - which has involved [pupils/students], staff and parents, and a risk assessment. In producing this policy, we have reviewed cases of child-on-child abuse in school, discussed the lesson learnt, consulted staff and student and shared our findings with Governors.
- Applies to all (Governors, SLT, staff, volunteers, contractors etc.).
- It is reviewed annually, and updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which students are or may be exposed. A number of staff and students are involved in each annual review, which involves and is informed by an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of this policy over the previous year.
- Is the school's overarching policy for any issue that could constitute child-on-child abuse.
- Does not use the term *victim* and/or *perpetrator*. This is because our school takes a safeguarding approach to all individuals involved in allegations of, or concerns about, child-on-child abuse, including those who are alleged to have been abused and those who are alleged to have abused their peers, in addition to any sanctioning work that may also be required for the latter.
- Research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of child-on-child abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by peers, parents or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers.
- Uses the terms *child* and *children*, which is defined for the purposes of this policy as a person aged under 18. We have nonetheless chosen not to restrict our approach to child-on-child abuse under this policy to children but instead to adopt a wider interpretation of our safeguarding responsibilities so that they apply to all students, regardless of age. Although the starting point is that the school's response to child-on-child abuse should be the same for all students, regardless of age, there may be some additional considerations in relation to a student aged 18 or over in terms of how local agencies and/or partners respond. Similarly, the school's response to incidents

involving the exchange of youth produced sexual imagery will need to differ depending on the age of the students involved in line with UKCCIS recommendations.

- There is also likely to be a more significant criminal justice response in relation to any student responsible for abuse who is aged 18 or over.
- Is compliant with the statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in [KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION \(SEPTEMBER 2022\)](#).
- Should, if relevant, according to the concerns/allegations raised, be read in conjunction with the DfE's advice on [SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT BETWEEN CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES \(DECEMBER, 2017\)](#), and any other advice and guidance referred to within it, as appropriate.
- Should be read in conjunction with the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and any relevant Practice Guidance issued by it.

UNDERSTANDING CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

WHAT IS CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE?

At RGS, we recognise that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take a zero-tolerance approach to any form of child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of 'banter' or 'growing up'. All reports of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously.

For these purposes, child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), and regardless of whether they are the same age or of different ages.

Child-on-child abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender-based violence.

Abuse can happen in or outside of the school setting, and as a school we should consistently adopt an "it can happen here" approach and remain vigilant and proactive.

In cases where child-on-child abuse is identified, we will follow our child protection procedures, recognising that both the victim and perpetrator will require support, and that there may be physical and mental health implications too.

The initial concern, however raised, will be recorded on CPOMS and additional information from disclosures by victims, perpetrators, friends, staff or family will be added to build a picture of the nature and extent of the abuse and the interventions employed.

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways:

- Child sexual exploitation/Child criminal exploitation
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (referred to in previous guidance as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery – see Appendix I))
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate friendships/relationship abuse
- Children who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence between children
- Gang associated and serious violence
- Technology can be used for bullying and other abusive behaviour.

There are a number of factors that make children more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse: experience of abuse within their family, living with domestic violence, young people in care, children who go missing, children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities).

Research tells us girls are more frequently identified as being abused by their peers, and girls are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching or verbal sexual comments in schools. Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse. Boys report high levels of victimisation in areas where they are affected by gangs.

There is an increasing evidence base emerging about the sexual exploitation of boys (both by adults and peers). We recognise that both boys and girls experience child-on-child abuse but they can do so in gendered ways.

A difficult feature of child-on-child abuse is that the perpetrators could be victims themselves and possibly are being abused by their parents or caregivers. Sometimes those involved in child-on-child abuse do not recognise behaviours as abusive.

Relationship abuse is unacceptable behaviour between two people. Students don't have to be an 'official couple' to experience abuse and it doesn't matter what the relationship looks like; gay, straight or bi, nor does the gender identity of the student matter.

PREVENTING CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Peer abuse can be prevented. The School employs a number of measures to maintain awareness of the possibility of child-on-child abuse.

- Have clear robust policies on dealing with key issues such as cyberbullying.
- Ensure staff and students are aware of the policies and understand them.
- Ensure staff are trained on sexual harassment and sexual violence between children and young people
- Ensure staff are trained and kept up to date on issues surrounding protected characteristics and discriminatory bullying.
- Ensure that all new staff are trained on e-safety issues as part of their induction programme
- Ensure staff are trained and kept up to date on e-safety issues
- Ensure that staff are aware of and actively encourage the reporting procedures for children to use
- Identify any blind spots within the School.
- Supervise and be aware of potential risky areas, tents in play areas etc.
- Pay attention and monitor children who are sneaking off in areas out of view.
- Take steps to prevent isolation.

These types of abuse rarely take place in isolation and often indicate wider safeguarding concerns. For example, a teenage girl may be in a sexually exploitative relationship with a teenage boy who is himself being physically abused by a family member or by older boys. Equally, sexual bullying in schools and other settings can result in the sexual exploitation of children by their peers. For 16 and 17 year olds who are in abusive relationships, what may appear to be a case of domestic violence may also involve sexual exploitation. Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to child on child abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of child on child abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences. The school does this by adopting a *contextual safeguarding* approach and ensuring that our response to incidents of child on child abuse takes into account any potential complexity.

WHAT IS CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING?

This policy encapsulates a contextual safeguarding approach. It is an approach to safeguarding children that recognises their experiences of significant harm in extra-familial contexts, and seeks to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;

- Recognises that as children enter adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time outside of the home in public environments (including on the internet) within which they may experience abuse; and
- considers interventions to change the systems or social conditions of the environments in which abuse has occurred. For example, rather than move a child from a school, professionals could work with the school leadership

and student body to challenge harmful, gendered school cultures, thus improving the pre-existing school environment.

HOW PREVALENT IS CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE?

Research suggests that child-on-child abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse affecting children in the UK. For example, more than four in ten teenage school-girls aged between 13 and 18 in England have experienced sexual coercion (Barter et al 2015). Two thirds of contact sexual abuse experienced by children aged 17 or under was committed by someone who was also aged 17 or under.

WHEN DOES BEHAVIOUR BECOME PROBLEMATIC OR ABUSIVE?

All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a child's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS

As the NSPCC explains, *"children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to highly abnormal and abusive. Staff are trained and reminded to recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour. As both problematic and abusive sexual behaviours are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage, a useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviours or HSB."*

NORMAL	INAPPROPRIATE	PROBLEMATIC	ABUSIVE	VIOLENT
Developmentally expected - Socially Acceptable - Consensual, mutual, reciprocal - Shared decision making	Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour - Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group - Context for behaviour may be inappropriate - Generally consensual and reciprocal	Problematic and concerning behaviour - Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected - No overt elements of victimisation - Consent issues may be unclear - May lack reciprocity or equal power - May include levels of compulsivity	- Victimising intent or outcome - Includes misuse of power - Coercion and force to ensure compliance - Intrusive - Informed consent lacking or not able to be freely given - May include elements of expressive violence	- Physically violent sexual abuse - Highly intrusive - Instrumental violence which is psychologically and/or sexually arousing to the child responsible for the behaviour - Sadism

The [Brook Behaviours Traffic Light Tool](#) can also be very helpful in identifying sexual behaviours by children, reflecting what may be deemed safe and healthy sexual behaviours by age group. This can be found in [APPENDIX I](#) of the [RGS SAFEGUARDING POLICY](#).

Staff should always use their professional judgment and discuss any concerns with the DSL. Where an (alleged) incident involves a report of sexually harmful behaviour, staff should consult the DSL who will follow DfE Advice – [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance](#).

See Appendix I on Harmful Sexual Behaviours.

OTHER BEHAVIOUR

When dealing with other alleged behaviour which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff can draw on aspects of Hackett's continuum to assess where the alleged behaviour falls on a spectrum and to decide how to respond. This could include, for example, whether it:

- Is socially acceptable
- Involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- Is socially acceptable within the peer group
- Is problematic and concerning
- Involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- Involves an element of coercion or pre-planning

- Involves a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power
- Involves a misuse of power.

It should be borne in mind that there are some aspects of Hackett's continuum which may not of course be relevant or appropriate to consider in response to other alleged behaviour involving reports of other types of abuse. For example, the issue of consent and the nuances around it, is unlikely to apply in the same way in cases where the alleged behaviour is reported to involve emotional and/or physical abuse, as it could in cases of alleged sexual behaviour which is reported to involve harmful sexual behaviour.

In addition, the school could be required to deal with cases involving a range of alleged behaviours including sexual behaviour, emotional, physical behaviour and digital behaviour. It is recognised that the same behaviour presented by different children may be understood at different points on a spectrum, depending on the particular context. For example, an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery may be inappropriate in one context, for example, when exchanged between two children in a consenting relationship, and abusive in another, for example, when it is:

- (a) shared without the consent of the child in the image;
- (b) produced as a result of coercion; or
- (c) used to pressure the child into engaging in other sexual behaviours.

Behaviour which is not abusive at first may potentially become abusive quickly or over time. Intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour which may be displayed by a child is vital, and could potentially prevent their behaviour from progressing on a continuum to become problematic, abusive and/or violent - and ultimately requiring (greater/more formal) engagement with specialist external and/or statutory agencies. For example, a physical fight between two children may not constitute child-on-child abuse where the fight is a one-off incident but may be abusive where the child/children's behaviour subsequently deteriorates into a pattern of bullying behaviour and requires a safeguarding response from a multi-agency partnership - including a statutory assessment of whether this has led, for example, to a risk of significant harm to a child.

The importance of intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour does not just apply on an individual student basis but could also apply across the student body.

Behaviour generally considered inappropriate may in fact indicate emerging concerning behaviour to which we need to take a whole-school approach in order to prevent escalation. For example, where multiple boys are making inappropriate comments about girls, one-off sanctions are unlikely to be effective and wider actions should be considered, such as arranging for an external person to deliver a year group intervention exercise; revising the school's SRE programme; and/or a discussion around whether anything is happening within the wider community that might be affecting the student's behaviour.

It will also be important to consider the wider context in which the alleged behaviour is reported to have occurred, and which may trigger the need for a referral. For example, some behaviour that is considered inappropriate may be capable of being dealt with internally. However, if there are wider safeguarding concerns relating to the child/children in question, a referral to statutory agencies may be necessary.

Where the behaviour which is the subject of the concern(s)/allegation(s) is considered or suspected by the DSL to constitute child on child abuse, the school will follow the procedures set out below.

HOW CAN A CHILD WHO IS BEING ABUSED BY THEIR PEERS BE IDENTIFIED?

All staff should be alert to the well-being of students and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by child-on-child abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

Signs that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse (please see [SECTION 6](#) of the [RGS SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY](#) for indicators of abuse) and can include:

- Failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected;
- physical injuries;
- experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing;
- becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks; suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much;
- broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse;

- changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age;
- abusive behaviour towards others.

Abuse affects children very differently. The above list is by no means exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse. The behaviour that children present with will depend on their particular circumstances. Rather than checking behaviour against a list, staff are trained to be alert to behaviour that might cause concerns, to think about what the behaviour might signify, to encourage children to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour, and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents/carers so that the cause(s) of their behaviour can be investigated. Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being harmed or abused by their peers) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.

LOOKING BEHIND A STUDENT'S BEHAVIOUR

A 15-year old girl starts to exhibit challenging behaviour in class which is out of character. She starts to have disagreements with the girls in her class and a number of "friendship issues" are reported to the teachers. The school moves the girl to another class, changes her timetable so that she does not have to interact with the girls in question, and provides her with a mentor. A few months later the girl throws a chair across the classroom. The girl is sent to the head teacher who calls the parents and temporarily excludes the girl from school.

The pastoral lead discusses the incident with the head teacher, explaining that the behaviour is completely out of character for the girl and that the school should explore the matter further. The pastoral lead sits down with the girl and asks her how she is. The girl discloses that her boyfriend is being physically violent and verbally abusive towards her.

The power dynamic that can exist between children is also very important when identifying and responding to their behaviour: in all cases of child on child abuse, a power imbalance will exist within the relationship. This inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the child responsible for the abuse and the child being abused. It may, for example, be the result of their relative social or economic status. Equally, while children who abuse may have power over those who they are abusing, they may be simultaneously powerless to others.

ARE SOME CHILDREN PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO ABUSING OR BEING ABUSED BY THEIR PEERS?

Any child can be vulnerable to child-on-child abuse due to the strength of peer influence during adolescence, and staff should be alert to signs of such abuse amongst all children. Individual and situational factors can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse by their peers. For example, an image of a child could be shared, following which they could become more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse due to how others now perceive them, regardless of any characteristics which may be inherent in them and/or their family. Peer group dynamics can also play an important role in determining a child's vulnerability to such abuse. For example, children who are more likely to follow others and/or who are socially isolated from their peers may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse.

Gender: Research suggests that child-on-child abuse may affect boys differently from girls and that this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make-up.

LGBTQ+ Children: Children who are, or appear to be, questioning or exploring their sexuality may also be particularly vulnerable to abuse by their peers.

Children with SEND: Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or the consequences of doing so, can render a child with SEND more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse – either the victim or perpetrator. KCSIE 2022 requires any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and the SENCO.

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

HOW CAN THE SCHOOL RAISE AWARENESS OF AND PREVENT CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE?

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The school actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by:

Educating all Governors, Senior Leadership Team, staff and volunteers, students, and parents about this issue. This includes:

- Our school adopts a values-based whole-school approach. This expects all of our community to demonstrate tolerance, respect and inclusivity, and to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any forms of prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour.
- training all Governors, SLT, staff and volunteers on the nature, prevalence and effect of child-on-child abuse, and how to prevent, identify and respond to it. This includes (a) Contextual Safeguarding; (b) the identification and classification of specific behaviours; and (c) the importance of taking seriously all forms of child-on-child abuse (no matter how low level they may appear) and ensuring that no form of child-on-child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing.
- All staff are aware of our zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. We adopt a S.C.A.R. approach to any form of child-on-child abusive behaviour –
STOP CHALLENGE ADDRESS REPORT
- E-safety training is part of the induction programme for all new staff, and on-going e-safety training and updates occur for all staff over the academic year.
- educating children about the nature and prevalence of child-on-child abuse via PSHE and the wider curriculum. For example, by addressing gender inequality in a statistics class, or by reviewing literature in an English class which addresses bullying and its effect on mental health. Students are frequently told what to do if they witness or experience such abuse, the effect that it can have on those who experience it and the possible reasons for it, including vulnerability of those who inflict such abuse. They are regularly informed about the school's approach to such issues, including its zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of child-on-child abuse.
- Students are regularly reminded of reporting channels to raise concerns for themselves or on behalf of others.
- Regular surveying of our students on issues of wellbeing
- Our senior students who hold positions of leadership and responsibility are aware of the importance of demonstrating our school values and role modelling to other students.
- We have a growing programme of peer support in the school, such as our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, peer mentors and Pride ambassadors.

Engaging parents on this issue by:

- Talking about it with parents, both in groups and one to one;
- asking parents what they perceive to be the risks facing their child and how they would like to see the school address those risks;
- involving parents in the review of school policies and lesson plans; and
- encouraging parents to hold the school to account on this issue.
- Ensuring that all child-on-child abuse issues are fed back to the school's safeguarding and pastoral team so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify [pupils/students] who may be in need of additional support. For example, this is done by way of a weekly staff meeting at which all concerns about students (including child-on-child abuse issues) are discussed;
- challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom);
- working with Governors, SLT, all staff and volunteers, students and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the school community;
- creating conditions in which our students can aspire to and enjoy safe and healthy relationships;
- creating a culture in which our students feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to;
- responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately.

MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

The school actively engages with its local partners in relation to child-on-child abuse, and works closely with, for example, Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP), Newcastle MASH, children's social care, and/or other relevant agencies, and other schools. The school also utilises independent safeguarding advisors, Clennell Education Services to support our approach.

The relationships the school has built with these partners are essential to ensuring that the school is able to prevent, identify early and appropriately handle cases of child on child abuse. They help the school:

- to develop a good awareness and understanding of the different referral pathways that operate in its local area, as well as the preventative and support services which exist;
- to ensure that our students are able to access the range of services and support they need quickly;
- to support and help inform our local community's response to child-on-child abuse;
- to increase our awareness and understanding of any concerning trends and emerging risks in our local area to enable us to take preventative action to minimise the risk of these being experienced by our students.

The school actively refers concerns/allegations of child-on-child abuse where necessary to children's social care, and/or other relevant agencies.

This is particularly important because child-on-child abuse can be a complex issue, and even more so where wider safeguarding concerns exist. It is often not appropriate for one single agency (where the incident cannot be managed internally) to try to address the issue alone – it requires effective partnership working.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We take a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse.

child on child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of 'banter' or 'growing up'.

All reports of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously, handled sensitively, appropriately and promptly.

The way in which they are responded to can have a significant impact on our school environment and culture.

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Any response should:

- Include a thorough investigation of the concerns/allegations and the wider context in which they may have occurred (as appropriate);
- treat all children involved as being at potential risk - while the child allegedly responsible for the abuse may pose a significant risk of harm to other children, they may also have considerable unmet needs and be at risk of harm themselves. The School will ensure a safeguarding response is in place for both the child who has allegedly experienced the abuse, and the child who has allegedly been responsible for it, and additional sanctioning work may be required for the latter;
- take into account:
 - that the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the children involved and consider and address the effect of wider socio-cultural contexts - such as the child's/children's peer group (both within and outside the school); family; the school environment; their experience(s) of crime and victimisation in the local community; and the child/children's online presence. Consider what changes may need to be made to these contexts to address the child's/children's needs and to mitigate risk; and
 - the potential complexity of child-on-child abuse and of children's experiences and consider the interplay between power, choice and consent. While children may appear to be making choices, if those choices are limited they are not consenting;
 - the views of the child/children affected. Unless it is considered unsafe to do so (for example, where a referral needs to be made immediately), the DSL should discuss the proposed action with the child/children and their parents and obtain consent to any referral before it is made. The School should manage the child/children's expectations about information sharing, and keep them and their parents informed of developments, where appropriate and safe to do so.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT EITHER THAT A CHILD MAY BE AT RISK OF OR EXPERIENCING ABUSE BY OTHER CHILDREN, OR THAT A CHILD MAY BE AT RISK OF ABUSING OR MAY BE ABUSING OTHER CHILDREN?

If a child is in immediate danger, or at risk of significant harm, a referral to children's social care (if the student is aged under 18) and/or the police should be made immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made.

If a member of staff thinks for whatever reason that a child may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by another child, or that a child may be at risk of abusing or may be abusing another child, they should discuss their concern with the DSL without delay so that a course of action can be agreed.

If a child speaks to a member of staff about child-on-child abuse that they have witnessed or are a part of, the member of staff should listen to the child and use open language that demonstrates understanding rather than judgement. For further details, please see the procedure set out in [SECTION 6](#) of the [RGS SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY](#).

HOW WILL THE SCHOOL RESPOND TO CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE?

The DSL will discuss the concerns or allegations with the member of staff who has reported them and will, where necessary, take any immediate steps to ensure the safety of the child/all children affected.

The DSL will always use their professional judgement to determine whether it is appropriate for alleged behaviour to be dealt with internally and, if so, whether any external specialist support is required. In borderline cases, the DSL may wish to consult with children's social care and/or any other external agencies on a no-names basis to determine the most appropriate response. Where the DSL considers or suspects that the behaviour in question might be abusive or violent on a spectrum (as opposed to inappropriate or problematic), the DSL will contact the Newcastle MASH or Children's Social Care immediately, and in any event within 24 hours of the DSL becoming aware of it. The DSL will discuss the allegations/concerns with social care or our safeguarding advisors and agree on a course of action, which may include:

A – MANAGE INTERNALLY WITH HELP FROM EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS WHERE APPROPRIATE AND POSSIBLE

Where behaviour between children is abusive or violent (as opposed to inappropriate or problematic), scenarios B, C or D should ordinarily apply. However, where support from local agencies is not available, the School may need to handle allegations/concerns internally. In these cases, the School will engage and seek advice from external specialists.

B – UNDERTAKE/CONTRIBUTE TO AN INTER-AGENCY EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT, WITH TARGETED EARLY HELP SERVICES PROVIDED TO ADDRESS THE ASSESSED NEEDS OF A CHILD/CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILY

These services may, for example, include CAMHS/CYPS, a specialist harmful sexual behaviour team, and/or youth offending services.

C – REFER CHILD/CHILDREN TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE FOR A SECTION 17 AND/OR 47 STATUTORY ASSESSMENT

As a matter of best practice, if an incident of child-on-child abuse requires referral to and action by children's social care and a strategy meeting is convened, then the school will hold every professional involved in the case accountable for their safeguarding response, including themselves, to both the child who has experienced the abuse, and the child who was responsible for it, and the contexts to which the abuse was associated.

D – REPORT ALLEGED CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR TO THE POLICE

Alleged criminal behaviour will ordinarily be reported to the Police. However, there are some circumstances where it may not be appropriate to report such behaviour to the Police, for example, where the exchange of youth produced sexual imagery does not involve any aggravating factors. All concerns/allegations will be assessed on a case by case basis, and in light of the wider context.

INDIVIDUAL RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

INDIVIDUAL RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Where there is an incident of child on child abuse, the School will carry out a robust risk and needs assessment in respect of each child affected by the abuse. These risk assessments will:

- i) assess and address the nature and level of risks that are posed and/or faced by the child;
- ii) engage the child's parents and draw upon local services and agencies to ensure that the child's needs are met in the long-term. Consider whether any targeted interventions are needed to address the underlying attitudes or behaviour of any child; and
- iii) be reviewed at regular intervals in light of the child's on-going needs to ensure that real progress is being made which benefits the child.

If at any stage the child's needs escalate, the DSL should contact Children's Social Care to determine the appropriate course of action.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The school will consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any child/children involved – any such action should address the abuse, the causes of it, and attitudes underlying it.

Disciplinary action may sometimes be appropriate, including:

- to ensure that the child/children take(s) responsibility for and realise(s) the seriousness of their behaviour;
- to demonstrate to the child/children and others that child-on-child abuse can never be tolerated; and
- to ensure the safety and wellbeing of other children.

However, these considerations must be balanced against the child's/children's own potential unmet needs and any safeguarding concerns. Before deciding on appropriate action, the school will always consider its duty to safeguard all children from harm; the underlying reasons for a child's behaviour; any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the child; the risk that the child may pose to other children; and the severity of the child-on-child abuse and the causes of it.

The school will, where appropriate, consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of using managed moves or exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognising that even if this is ultimately deemed to be necessary, some of the measures referred to in this policy may still be required.

Disciplinary interventions alone are rarely able to solve issues of child-on-child abuse, and the school will always consider the wider actions that may need to be taken, and any lessons that may need to be learnt going forwards.

WHAT IF THE REPORT OF CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE IS UNFOUNDED OR FALSE?

If a report is found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious then the DSL should investigate whether the person making the allegation did so as a cry for help and therefore needed further pastoral support, or whether this was a malicious act and would warrant disciplinary action (in line with the behavioural policy or serious disciplinary issues guidance)

ON-GOING PROACTIVE WORK TO A CONTEXTUAL WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH

The school's response to concerns/allegations of child-on-child abuse should be part of on-going proactive work by the school to embed best practice and take a contextual whole-school approach to such abuse. As such, the school's response can become part of its wider prevention work. This response may include the school asking itself a series of questions about the context in which an incident of child-on-child abuse occurred in the school, the local community in which the School is based, and the wider physical and online environment, such as:

- What protective factors and influences exist within the school (such as positive peer influences, examples where child on child abuse has been challenged etc.) and how can the school bolster these?
- How (if at all) did the school's physical environment contribute to the abuse, and how can the school address this going forwards, for example by improving the school's safety, security and supervision?
- Did wider gender norms, equality issues and/or societal attitudes contribute to the abuse?
- What was the relationship between the abuse and the cultural norms between staff and students, and how can these be addressed going forwards?
- Does the abuse indicate a need for staff training on, for example, underlying attitudes, a particular issue or the handling of particular types of abuse?
- How have similar cases been managed in the past and what effect has this had?
- Does the case or any identified trends highlight areas for development in the way in which the School works with children to raise their awareness of and/or prevent child on child abuse, including by way of the school's PSHE curriculum and lessons that address underlying attitudes or behaviour such as gender and equalities work?
- Are there any lessons to be learnt about the way in which the School engages with parents to address child-on-child abuse issues?
- Are there underlying issues that affect other schools in the area and is there a need for a multi-agency response?

- Does this case highlight a need to work with certain children to build their confidence and teach them how to identify and manage abusive behaviour?
- Were there opportunities to intervene earlier or differently and/or to address common themes amongst the behaviour of other children in the school?

Answers to these questions can be developed into an action plan that is reviewed on a regular basis by SLT and the DSL.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse/

Details some of the complicated reasons why children abuse other children:

- The child may have been emotionally, physically, or sexually abused themselves.
- The child may have witnessed physical or emotional violence.
- The child may have viewed sexually explicit movies, video games or other materials.
- The child may have just acted impulsively without meaning to harm anyone.

Peer abuse must be taken extremely seriously for these reasons. It could be an indicator of even worse abuse going on in the child's home.

APPENDIX I: HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

SEXUALISED BEHAVIOUR

Green Behaviours	Amber Behaviours	Red Behaviours
are part of safe and healthy sexual development which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability• reflect curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices• 'normal' but inappropriate within the school/classroom setting	are potentially outside safe and healthy development due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• age or developmental differences• activity type, frequency, duration or context	are clearly outside safe and healthy development and: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• involve much more coerciveness, secrecy, compulsiveness & threats• require action from school & other agencies

For further information of sexualized behaviour thresholds, visit www.brook.org.uk

SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

- Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline.
- Sexual harassment can include sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about appearance, sexual "jokes" or taunting; physical behaviour, such as: deliberating brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes.
- Online sexual harassment, which might include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images / videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats.
- KCSIE 2022 makes clear that sexual violence and harassment exists on a continuum and that evidence shows that it is more likely that girls, LGBT children and children with SEND will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable.
- Upskirting is now a criminal offence. Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

At RGS we are aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up', 'just having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'; and
- ensuring our students understand age-appropriate issues surrounding healthy

relationships, respect, inclusivity, protected characteristics and consent

- challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Ensuring our students know how to recognise, challenge and report harmful sexual behaviours

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Part Five: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment KCSIE 2022

www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges

SEXTING

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

Sexting can be defined as 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet.'

If staff become concerned about a 'sexting' issue they should **not** look at, download, share or print any indecent image and should:

STEP 1: If a device is involved, confiscate it and set it to flight mode or, if not possible, switch it off.

STEP 2: Seek advice - give the electronic device immediately to the DSL. Report your concerns following our normal child protection procedures. If you have viewed the images then tell the DSL at the time of reporting.

CONCERNING FACTORS THAT DSLs SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR:

- ✓ Is there a significant age difference between the sender/receiver?
- ✓ Is there any external coercion involved or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver?
- ✓ Do you recognise the child as more vulnerable than usual i.e. at risk? Is the image of a severe or extreme nature?
- ✓ Is the situation isolated or has the image been more widely distributed?
- ✓ Have these children been involved in a sexting incident before?
- ✓ Are there other circumstances relating to either sender or recipient that may add cause for concern i.e. difficult home circumstances?

Remember: The production and distribution of sexting images involving anyone under the age of 18 is illegal and needs very careful management for all those involved. The School follows the guidelines published by UKCCIS.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis

APPENDIX J: ONLINE SAFETY & USE OF DEVICES

The RGS recognises that the fast-paced development of internet technology brings both benefit and danger to young people and the School works in a variety of ways to educate its students to understand and use technology, particularly internet access and social media, safely.

In line with KCSIE 2021, all new staff will receive e-safety training as part of their induction to the school. All staff can expect to receive regular e-safety training as part of their on-going CPD and training schedule.

Through use of technology in lessons students in both the Junior and Senior School are taught about appropriate use of technology and educated on potential risks online. In the Junior School students do not have access to their own devices during the school day. If students bring a device into school it is collected in and stored by the form teacher until the end of the day.

In the Senior School, most Year groups are issued with a Surface Pro device. Each device has Senso filtering and monitoring software. Students sign an AUP at the start of each academic year or on entry to the school. Senior School students are allowed to bring their own electronic device into school. In Years 7 - 11 students are not allowed to access their devices without permission from a member of staff between 8.45am – 4.00pm.

The Senior School does not allow use of electronic devices in the Dining Hall during lunch or whilst moving around the corridors. Mobile devices should be away and switched to silent during lessons, unless the teacher has given specific permission otherwise. Misuse of devices during the school day will result in the confiscation of devices. All students have access to appropriately filtered school Wi-Fi. The School also uses monitoring software (Smoothwall and Senso) which monitors student activity online and alerts the School to safeguarding concerns. This does not cover individual 4G or 5G network coverage. All students and staff sign an IT and device user agreement at the start of each academic year.

The School recognises that e-safety can only be effective when conducted in partnership with parents and families. The school website has a specific area for e-safety where students and parents can find a link to CEOP (to report abuse) and other e-safety resources. Parents are supported in understanding and protecting their children online through formal opportunities to attend talks and access to the Parentzone portal via the school website.

The School reviews its e-safety approach throughout the school year and uses the SWGfl 360 Safe tool to help audit our provision. The Digital Strategy Group brings together key teaching and support staff to develop all aspects of the school's use of technology, including e-safety.

Further detail can be found in the *E-SAFETY POLICY*, *STAFF ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY*, *STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY*.

APPENDIX K: TRAFFICKING & MODERN SLAVERY

Trafficking of persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

'**CHILD**' shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

The Palermo Protocol establishes children as a special case. Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim, whether or not they have been forced or deceived. This is partly because it is **NOT CONSIDERED POSSIBLE FOR CHILDREN TO GIVE INFORMED CONSENT**. Even when a child understands what has happened, they may still appear to submit willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents or accompanying adults. It is important that these children are protected too.

WHY ARE CHILDREN TRAFFICKED?

Children are trafficked for many reasons, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, labour, benefit fraud and involvement in criminal activity such as pick-pocketing, theft and working in cannabis farms. There are a number of cases of minors being exploited in the sex industry. Although there is no evidence of other forms of exploitation such as 'organ donation or 'harvesting', all agencies should remain vigilant

Children may be trafficked from other countries for a variety of reasons. There are a number of factors in the country of origin which might make children vulnerable to being trafficked.

The factors listed below are by no means a comprehensive list:

- Poverty
- Lack of education
- Discrimination
- Cultural attitudes
- Grooming
- Dysfunctional families
- Political conflict and economic transition
- Inadequate local laws and regulations.

POTENTIAL INDICATORS

Once in the UK the child:

- receives unexplained/unidentified phone calls whilst in placement/temporary accommodation;
- shows signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy;
- has a history with missing links and unexplained moves;
- has gone missing from Local Authority care;

- is required to earn a minimum amount of money every day;
- works in various locations;
- has limited freedom of movement;
- appears to be missing for periods;
- is known to beg for money;
- performs excessive housework chores and rarely leaves the residence;
- is being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good; is one among a number of unrelated children found at one address;
- has not been registered with or attended a GP practice;
- has not been enrolled in school;
- has to pay off an exorbitant debt, e.g. for travel costs, before having control over own earnings, is permanently deprived of a large part of their earnings by another person; and/or
- is excessively afraid of being deported.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance

APPENDIX L: DOMESTIC ABUSE

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is (Domestic Abuse Act 2021):

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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Economic / Financial
- Emotional/psychological
- Controlling or coercive behaviour

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

SIGNS, INDICATIONS AND EFFECTS

It is often 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
- Not wanting to leave a parent
- Display anti-social behaviour
- Suffer depression or anxiety
- Not do as well in school – due to difficulties at home, lack of sleep etc.

OTHER SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

Withdrawn, suddenly behaves differently, clingy, problems sleeping, eating disorders, wets the bed, soils clothes, takes risk, misses school, changes in eating habits, obsessive behaviour, nightmares, drugs, alcohol, self-harm, thoughts of suicide. *Source* www.nspcc.org.uk

Staff are encouraged to be particularly open to the possibility that students may experience or witness domestic abuse. In independent schools, the reporting of domestic abuse is abnormally low. There are a number of factors (both positive and negative) which might contribute to low levels of reporting but principally students and families may fear that the consequences of reporting abuse may be that the family is no longer in a position to fund a school place or that extended family or the local community will judge the family.

APPENDIX M: HOMELESSNESS

In most cases, the School will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families and intervention will be on that basis. It is not unheard of in our school for students in the sixth form (aged 16-18) to report that they are living independently from their parents, for example through their exclusion from the family home. If this is the case, it is a safeguarding matter that will normally be referred to Children's services, although the child's circumstances will be taken into account so that appropriate referrals are made.

TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS AND BAD HOUSING:

- Living in temporary or emergency accommodation (such as B & Bs and hostels).
- Hidden homelessness (staying with friends or family on a temporary basis or living in overcrowded conditions).
- Couch/sofa surfing, moving from one place to another.
- Being at risk of abuse or violence leading to homelessness or overcrowding.

IMPACT OF HOMELESSNESS

- Practical issues include loss of possessions required for school e.g. books, uniform etc.
- Maybe unkempt due to lack of laundry services.
- Physically exhausted due to sleeping arrangements.
- Emotionally exhausted due to increased stress.
- Signs of severe emotional trauma leading to emotional stress, anxiety.
- Changes in behaviour or/and problematic behaviour.
- Student may become withdrawn or aggressive.
- If placed out of area they may arrive late or miss school due to transport/financial difficulties.
- The student's ability to maintain relationships may be affected.
- May 'stand out' more to peers, leading to feelings of alienation and self-consciousness.
- Impact on attainment levels and ability to learn.

Source: *Shelter 2017*

APPENDIX N: MENTAL HEALTH

KCSIE 2022 makes a clearer link between mental health and safeguarding, and stresses the role that schools play in detecting possible problems and supporting good mental wellbeing. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can be an indication of abuse, neglect or exploitation (KCSIE 2022).

We should not attempt to diagnose mental health problems, but we are well placed to identify behavior which may indicate that a child is experiencing mental health problems or is at risk of developing one.

Staff should immediately raise any mental health concern as a safeguarding concern with the DSL or DDSL.

Staff should be aware how adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), like abuse and neglect, can have a lasting impact on a child's mental health, behavior and education.

Schools must recognize their role in supporting their students' mental health, and governing bodies should ensure that clear systems and processes are in place for identifying possible problems, routes for escalation and referrals.

Staff should receive training on how to identify and manage more common mental health problems, and that mental health is a possible indicator of safeguarding concerns.

Our School should reflect on the support and reporting systems in place for pupils, and how we best promote good mental health and wellbeing in our school.

Our nominated Senior Mental Health lead in school is Mrs K Hammill.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Advice and guidance can be found in [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) which sets out best practice in this area.

Public Health England has guidance on promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing [here](#).

Link Programme information: <https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/our-work-with-schools/the-link-programme/>

APPENDIX O: THE ROLE OF THE APPROPRIATE ADULT

How the Police conduct themselves when a person is detained and / or questioned is covered by the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(PACE\) Code C](#). In paragraph 1.7 the PACE guidance advises that "The role of the appropriate adult is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons", with there being further elaboration that the appropriate adult (AA) is **expected** (my emphasis) to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained persons rights and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights.

Equally important is that if the AA considers that the rights of the detained person are not being respected, or the police are not acting properly in their dealings with a detained person, the AA is **expected** (my emphasis again) to speak to an officer of the "rank of inspector or above". This therefore means that if the AA is not happy about something there is clear recourse to a senior officer who can then review and determine what steps should be taken. The active nature of the AA role is reinforced in [Home Office Guidance for Appropriate Adults](#), which states that the AA is not just an observer.

Safeguarding is therefore inherent within the AA role – this could be as basic as an AA reviewing the custody record of a detained person to check that the detained person has been given regular opportunities to access food and fluid. It is expected that the AA will support the detained person to understand what is being said to them allowing the detained person to participate fully in the process. As an AA, our role is to step in and check that the young person knows what they are being asked and thereby ensuring that the answer they give is the correct one, as opposed to one given through lack of understanding.

For example: The young person in question had been arrested on charges of rape. In interview, the officer started the questioning by seeking to clarify that the young person knew that they were being interviewed due to an allegation of rape. This was delivered more as a statement and not a question, leading to the young person agreeing with the officer. The AA stopped the interview at this point and asked the young person to define rape as a way of checking their understanding. As a result of this it became very clear that the young person's understanding of rape was very different to the legal definition of rape. Had this gone unchallenged the young person may have admitted to things within the interview without a full understanding of what the consequences could be.

The role of AA is therefore a vital and powerful role for children and vulnerable people when detained by the police. The AA does not and is not required to give legal advice – this is the purview of solicitors. [Research with vulnerable adults](#) published in 2017 identified the attributes that made an "ideal" AA. The research had two focus groups, one group being individuals who suffer from mental ill health and the other group having recognised learning disabilities. The groups suggested the following:

TABLE 1 The attributes of the ideal AA

The role of Comparing

Group 1 (mental health)	Group 2 (learning disability)
Calm	A good listener
Calming	Good communicator
Caring	Trained in all aspects of learning disability
Psychiatric knowledge	Trustworthy
Gender preference	Honest
Respectful of race, culture and sexual identity	Caring
Protective	Gender preference
Kind	Confidential
Confident	
Knows the correct procedures	
A people person	

the appropriate adult in supporting vulnerable adults in custody: the perspectives of service users and service providers. (2017) - p.6

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[Safeguarding and the role of the appropriate adult – Safeguarding Network](#)

APPENDIX P – KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS (NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE)

Social Care (Newcastle upon Tyne)	
Initial Response Service Children's Social Care Civic Centre, Barras Bridge Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8QH Tel: 0191 277 2500	Out of hours Emergency Duty Team Civic Centre Barras Bridge Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8PU Tel: 0191 2787878
Children's Social Care West Children's Services Directorate, Westgate College West Road Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 9LU Tel: 0191 277 2111	Children's Social Care East Children's Services Directorate, Allendale Depot, Allendale Road Byker Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2SZ Tel: 0191 278 8500

LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNED OFFICER (LADO)

LADO (Newcastle upon Tyne)	Telephone Number
Melanie Scott Civic Centre Barras Bridge Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8PU	Tel: 0191 277 4636

POLICE/LAW & ORDER

Department/Station	Telephone Number
Police Child Abuse and Vulnerable Adults Unit Protecting Vulnerable People Unit Middle Engine Lane Police Station Wallsend NE28 9NT	Tel: 101
Gateshead Police Station High West Street Gateshead NE8 1BN	Tel: 03456 043 043
Ian Wilkinson (5105) Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland Schools Safeguarding Coordinator	
Miriam Harper (9630) Northumberland, N & S Tyneside Schools Safeguarding Coordinator	
Prevent team Nicola Forbes Email: specialbranch@northumbria.pnn.police.uk	Tel: 101 ext. 63854
Anti Terrorist hotline	0800789321
Hate Crime: PC David (Bart) Burton 2832, Communities Engaged Team Email: 2832@northumbria.pnn.police.uk	0191 221 8315
For a non-police matter regarding hate crime, Newcastle City Council recommend contacting www.stophateuk.org	

EDUCATION

Department (Newcastle upon Tyne)	Telephone Number
Children Missing in Education Team	Tel: 0191 277 4500

OTHER CONTACTS

Title	Telephone Number
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	Helpline: 0800 800 5000
Newcastle and Gateshead Children and Young Persons Support (CYPS)	Tel: 0191 246 6913

APPENDIX Q – REGIONAL KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Usually, the DSL or deputy DSL will make a referral to social care. However, **ANYONE** can contact social care if they believe a child is at risk of serious harm and the School is not acting appropriately.

We are mindful that whilst the vast majority of students live in Newcastle, many of our students will live in neighbouring authorities who will have similar procedures. The procedures for the Local Safeguarding Partnerships can be found by following these links:

Newcastle	www.nscb.org.uk
Sunderland	www.sunderlandscb.com
North Tyneside	www.northtyneside.gov.uk
South Tyneside	www.southtyneside.gov.uk
Northumberland	www.northumberland.gov.uk
Gateshead	www.gateshead.gov.uk/LSCB
County Durham	www.durham-lscb.gov.uk

A student should be referred to the social care department in the authority in which they live:

Newcastle	0191 277 2500
Sunderland	0191 566 1500
North Tyneside	0191 643 7979
South Tyneside	0191 424 5010
Gateshead	0191 433 2653
County Durham	0845 850 5010

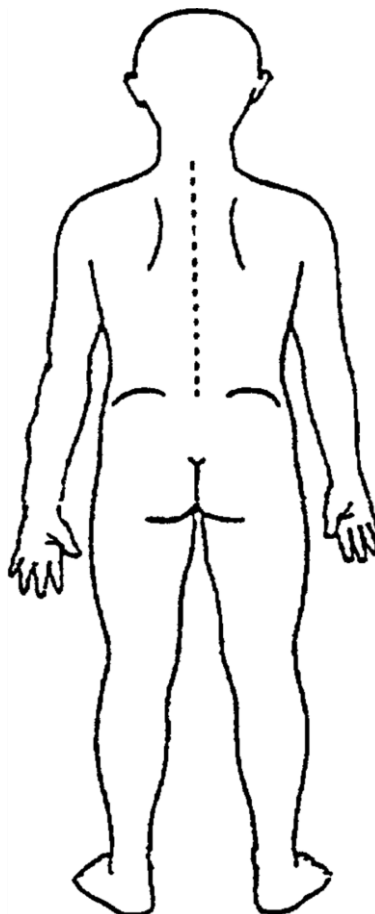
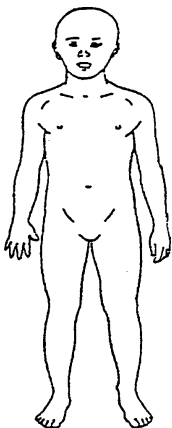
Northumberland is divided into locality teams:

Alnwick	01665 626830
Ashington	01670 815060
Bedlington	01670 536800
Berwick	01289 334000
Blyth	01670 354316
Cramlington	01670 712925
Hexham	01434 603582
Morpeth	01670 516131
16+ team	01670 714925

In all cases of concerns regarding an adult working with children the Newcastle **LADO** should be contacted: **Melanie Scott** 0191 277 4636

APPENDIX R – BODYMAP

Child's Full Name	DOB	Date



Electronic
Version:
Click and move
the red dot to
indicate where
the injury is
located on the
body/face.



Description of injury/additional notes:		
Professional's Name	Professional's Designation	Contact Number

Body maps can also be found on CPOMS and uploaded directly into the CPOMS incident form

CONTACT DETAILS

Royal Grammar School, Eskdale Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4DX

Tel: 0191 281 5711

Admissions: admissions@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

General enquiries:

communications@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

