



NORTHUMBRIA  
**POLICE & CRIME**  
**COMMISSIONER**

violence  
reduction  
unit

*Improving lives to prevent crime*

# Safeguarding Policy

# April 2022

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[vru@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk](mailto:vru@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk)**

**In an emergency you should call the police on 999**

This Safeguarding Policy sets out the processes in place for staff working in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (OPCC) to ensure children, young people and adults at risk are protected. In addition, this policy applies equally to all OPCC commissioned services and interventions.

A condensed guide, taken from the latest Department for Education (2021). *Keeping children safe in education*, is at Appendix 1. The appendices include definitions, sign and indicators of abuse and neglect for children and young people (Appendix 2) and adults at risk (Appendix 3).

## **What to do if you are told about abuse or have a safeguarding concern**

The nature of our work intentionally creates a safe environment and develops trusted relationships with our staff, this may lead to those we work with sharing details of their abuse or you may identify signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.

### **If a child, young person or adult at risk tells you they are being abused, you should:**

- ✓ Listen and take what your are told seriously
- ✓ Do not interrogate them, it is not your role to investigate the allegation or concern – leave that to the Police and/ or Social Workers
- ✓ Stay calm and reassure them using facial expression. Avoid physical contact, such as giving a hug, unless they want you to
- ✓ Tell them what you will do next
- ✓ Never promise to keep what you have been told a secret – you MUST report what you have been told
- ✓ Make a note, using their words, when you can of what you have been told

What you are told may be upsetting. If you have been affected by the experience seek support from your line manager or GP. Make sure you look after yourself.

### **Reporting an allegation or concern that a child, young person or adult at risk is being abused:**

- ✓ If you are in a school, college, youth or other setting speak to the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead who will implement their Safeguarding Policy. They will take immediate actions to ensure the safety of the child, young person or adult at risk, and are responsible for contacting the relevant local authority or Northumbria Police
- ✓ As soon as practicable, speak to the OPCC Designated Safeguarding Lead
- ✓ Keep the details of the concern or allegation confidential – only share information with those who NEED to know
- ✓ You might be asked to write down your concerns. Your OPCC DSL will help you with this

# Safeguarding Policy Statement of Intent

This policy outlines the expectations and key principles that all staff working in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (OPCC) and Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) should be aware of in relation to safeguarding children, young people and adults who are at risk of harm or abuse. The Northumbria area comprises the six local authorities of Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland. Each local authority has its own arrangements for safeguarding children and adults, these are available at [North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com)

The OPCC recognises the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk form part of its responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding across Northumbria. This policy ensures any services the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) commissions from third parties are compliant with the legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. The principles and good practice found in our approach to protecting children and young people are transferable to safeguarding adults at risk.

This policy applies to all employees of the OPCC and VRU, including temporary employees, secondees, agency staff, contractors and volunteers, and commissioned service providers. For direct employees of OPCC and VRU, this policy is in addition to the principles and expectations for conduct found in the Northumbria Police Staff Handbook.

In formulating this policy, we rely upon the guidance to be found in the:

- Department for Education (2018). *Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, see [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/729914/Working%20Together%20to%20Safeguard%20Children-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working%20Together%20to%20Safeguard%20Children-2018.pdf)
- Department for Education (2021). *Keeping children safe in education* (KCSIE)<sup>1</sup>, see [Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2021)
- the Care Act 2014, see [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted)

For the purposes of this policy:

A 'child' is defined by the Children Act 1989 as 'anyone under the age of 18'; and safeguarding children means to:

- protect children from abuse and maltreatment;
- prevent harm to children's health or development;
- ensure children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> This Department for Education guidance is regularly updated.

The term ‘adult at risk’, introduced in the Care Act 2014, applies to anyone aged 18 or over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect;
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

An adult at risk of abuse may:

- have an illness affecting their mental or physical health;
- have a learning disability;
- suffer from drug or alcohol problems;
- be frail.

We recognise that the safety and welfare of any child, young person or adult at risk is paramount; and that all children, young people or adults at risk whatever their age, gender, disability, cultural or ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity have a right to be treated with respect and protected from abuse.

**For any issues or comments regarding this policy, child protection or safeguarding children, young people or adults at risk please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

This policy is available at <https://northumbria-pcc.gov.uk>

## Safeguarding Procedures: Reporting and managing allegations or concerns

The management of allegations or concerns involving people who work with children and young people is an essential component of this Safeguarding Policy, which extends to the management of any allegations or concerns involving adults at risk.

This policy provides a framework for circumstances where it is alleged a person may pose a risk of harm to a child, young person or adult at risk. Harm<sup>2</sup> is not defined in legislation and should be considered in its widest context, including (but not limited to):

- sexual harm
- physical harm
- financial harm
- neglect
- emotional harm
- psychological harm
- verbal harm

An ‘allegation’ is where anyone working with children and young people or adults at risk has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; and/or

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<sup>2</sup> For more information see the Disclosure and Barring Service guidance on *harm*, available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#what-is-the-harm-test>

- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

(Adapted from DfE (2021) KCSIE, p.81)

A ‘concern’ (including an allegation which does not meet the harm threshold) may include:

- a suspicion;
- a complaint;
- a disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation;
- the result of vetting checks undertaken

(Adapted from DfE (2021) KCSIE, p.94)

In the case of a concern contact will be made with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership or Local Safeguarding Adults Partnership (in some areas these are combined partnerships); more often this will be where the child, young person or adult at risk resides.

In considering the report of an allegation there are three options for further action:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by a local authority about whether the child or adult at risk is in need of protection or other services;
- consideration of disciplinary action of an individual.

Any allegation or concern about a member of staff will be dealt with confidentially. The circumstances will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO or equivalent) to ensure that there is independent oversight of the investigation of that allegation or concern.

When an allegation is made or a concern is reported a written record will be kept with a summary of:

- the allegation or concern;
- details of how the allegation or concern was pursued and resolved;
- decisions and any action taken.

It is important that following the report of an allegation that support is provided for the child, young person or adult at risk involved, and, where appropriate, the person subject of the allegation or concern whilst any investigation is on-going.

**The fact that an OPCC member of staff is dismissed or resigns will not prevent an allegation or concern from being pursued. There is a legal duty to refer the moving or removal of an employee where harm has, or may have, occurred to a child or adult at risk to the Disclosure and Barring Service.**

## Child Protection

The OPCC's and VRU's activities may take place in educational, youth provision or other informal settings and are regarded as a 'regulated activity'<sup>3</sup> within the definition set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

The OPCC may engage full-time paid employees or commission intervention providers to work with children, young people or adults at risk, who shall be regarded as being engaged in a 'regulated activity' and will require a Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (or equivalent). For anyone waiting for their DBS check, arrangements will be put in place for any regulated activity to be supervised.

It is an offence to engage any person in a 'regulated activity' if that person has been barred from such activity by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## Safeguarding adults at risk

The principles and good practice for protecting children and young people (under the age of 18), set out in this policy, apply to adults at risk (those over the age of 18) but include additional considerations. Anyone engaged by the OPCC is to act as an 'alerter' for allegations or to raise concerns of any safeguarding issue for an adult at risk.

The *Social Care Institute for Excellence* suggests 6 principles in the safeguarding of adults<sup>4</sup>:

### **Empowerment**

People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

### **Prevention**

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

### **Proportionality**

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

### **Protection**

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

### **Partnership**

Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

### **Accountability**

Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

### **Capacity**

Where it is suspected that a child is subject of abuse or neglect there is an absolute duty to act and report suspicions, however, adults at risk or any adult who finds themselves in

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<sup>3</sup> What is a 'regulated activity'? There is more information available on the Home Office website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb/about-crb/crb-pofa-2012/ra-children/> and <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb/about-crb/crb-pofa-2012/ra-adults/> and the

Department for Education website at

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/a00209802/disclosure-barring>

<sup>4</sup> More information is available at <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/six-safeguarding-principles.asp>

vulnerable circumstances are assumed to have the *capacity* to make decisions about their own situation. This requires informed consent from the individual concerned regarding any actions that may be taken regarding concerns or allegations. For example, an adult at risk may choose to remain in an abusive situation, and this will limit how a report or information about concerns is shared.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 describes *capacity* or *mental capacity* as the ability to make a decision at a particular time and proposes five guiding principles<sup>5</sup>:

1. **A presumption of capacity:** Every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise; it cannot be assumed that someone cannot make a decision for themselves just because they have a particular medical condition or disability.
2. **Individuals being supported to make their own decisions:** A person must be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions.
3. **Unwise decisions:** People have the right to make decisions that others might regard as unwise or eccentric.

Where it has been judged, by professionals who are trained and qualified to make such a judgement, that an adult lacks capacity then decisions should consider:

4. **Best interests:** Anything done for or on behalf of a person who lacks mental capacity must be done in their best interests.
5. **Less restrictive option:** Someone making a decision or acting on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must consider whether it is possible to decide or act in a way that would interfere less with the person's rights and freedoms of action, or whether there is a need to decide or act at all.

**It is not the responsibility of OPCC staff to judge whether an adult at risk 'lacks capacity' but we should be mindful of our duty of care in considering the individual's wishes outlined in the principles 1. to 3. above.**

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<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.scie.org.uk/mca/introduction/mental-capacity-act-2005-at-a-glance>

## Specific Responsibilities

### Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

The senior responsible owner for this Safeguarding Policy, and with responsibility for the oversight of any safeguarding matters is:

Ruth Durham, Chief of Staff, OPCC

Contact Details: [Ruth.Durham@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk](mailto:Ruth.Durham@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk) Mobile: **07739354416**

The **SRO** will:

- review and maintain this Safeguarding Policy;
- be contacted as soon as practicable, but in any event within one working day, with the details of any safeguarding allegation or concern
- act as 'case manager' to lead any investigation and support the DSL in dealing with any allegations or concerns reported and ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases;
- support the DSL in co-ordinating training for OPCC staff;
- As appropriate, liaise with any local safeguarding partnership or the Police regarding any allegation or concern.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** is responsible for the application of this Safeguarding Policy and the procedures arising from it (see *Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead* in the DfE (2021) KCSIE)<sup>6</sup>.

Contact details: **Dr Eric Fletcher**

Phone: **07874 087482**

e mail: [eric.fletcher@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk](mailto:eric.fletcher@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk)

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** will:

- maintain relationships with local safeguarding partnerships and Northumbria Police;
- investigate any allegations or concerns reported by children, adults or staff of safeguarding issues ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases;
- in the event of a concern or allegation will ensure that the report is immediately (or within one-working day) brought to the attention of the SRO, and agree the appropriate action to be taken;
- be responsible for co-ordinating safeguarding training for OPCC staff.

**The Northumbria OPCC operate an open culture, it is the responsibility of all staff to raise any concern they may have regarding child protection or a safeguarding issue and that in doing so are assured that they will be taken seriously and the report will be treated in confidence.**

## Safer Recruitment

As part of the OPCC safer recruitment process, guidance and support is provided by Northumbria Police, Human Resources (HR) which includes managing and advertising job vacancies, processing application forms, checking references and ensuring police vetting is

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<sup>6</sup> Available at [Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2021)

complete following an offer of employment. Employment will not commence until police vetting has been completed.

For any staff role involving regular contact or engaging in regulated activities with children, young people or adults at risk, for example, the VRU Education Team, then Northumbria Police HR will advise on the level of DBS check required, and line-managers will ensure that staff are appropriately supervised in any regulated activity until the DBS process is complete.

The details of staff considered **not** suitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with the advice and support of the Northumbria Police HR.

### **Induction and safeguarding training**

All OPCC staff will be introduced to this safeguarding policy and their responsibilities as part of their induction programme<sup>7</sup>. All staff will receive safeguarding training and this should be refreshed every three years.

## **Good Practice**

### **Social media**

OPCC staff should only be ‘friends’ with work-related contacts on social networking sites via a designated and approved work account for business purposes.

### **Personal details**

OPCC staff should not divulge personal information on social media, such as your home address, personal phone numbers and email addresses to work-related contacts, e.g., volunteers, service users, intervention providers and beneficiaries.

### **Role modelling**

Please remember that as OPCC staff you are representing a community facing service and your actions should reflect the level of responsibility that this entails. All staff should aim to be excellent role models and display behaviours that reinforce the wider image and values of the OPCC AND VRU, including:

- treat everyone equally with respect and dignity;
- promoting healthier lifestyles
- be appropriately dressed and work in a respectful manner, for example, not use obscene language
- report any concerns that you may have about the conduct or behaviour of child, young person or adult at risk to the setting’s staff or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (in any other instance);
- be aware that you are in a position of trust and influence, recognising the boundaries between professional conduct and personal friendship;
- prioritise the safety and well-being of children, young people and adults at risk involved in any sessions or activities, ensuring that session content and/ or the activities are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual or group;

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<sup>7</sup> As set out in the Northumbria Police, Police Staff Induction Handbook.

- avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation;
- challenge negative or disruptive attitudes and behaviour;
- avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums;
- remember that your behaviour or actions may be misinterpreted by others, even if they are well meant, for example, inappropriate humour;

**If you are unsure or require advice and guidance, seek support from other staff, your line manager or the OPCC DSL.**

**You should never:**

- socialise with or invite a volunteer or service user to your home
- enter into inappropriate relationships, for example, relationships of an intensely personal or sexual nature, even though some volunteers are over the age of consent
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow the use of inappropriate language unchallenged or use inappropriate language yourself, this includes the spoken word or when writing in e mails or using social media
- trivialise or allow inappropriate or abusive conduct or behaviour to go unchallenged, such as bullying
- take part in inappropriate behaviour or contact, this can be physical, verbal or sexual;
- engage in physical contact games with young people, such a rough-housing
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- undertake any activity that could be construed as being ‘personal care’ (this type of support should have been identified during the booking process and appropriate arrangements made)
- allow a child or young person to drink alcohol or use drugs when working or attending events or interventions.

## Appendix 1 – Condensed safeguarding guidance

This is an extract from the Department for Education (2021). *Keeping children safe in education* and is provided here as a quick reference guide to safeguarding for OPCC staff.

### Annex A: Safeguarding information for school and college staff

The following is a condensed version of Part One of [the latest] *Keeping children safe in education*. It can be provided (instead of Part one) to those staff who do not directly work with children, if the governing body or proprietor think it will provide a better basis for those staff to promote the welfare of and safeguard children.

#### The role of school and college staff

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.  
**Everyone** who comes into contact with children has an important role to play.
2. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. It is important all staff (including those who do not work directly with children) recognise the important role they play in protecting children.

#### What school and college staff need to know

3. For the purposes of safeguarding, a child is anyone under the age of 18. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
  - protecting children from maltreatment;
  - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

#### All staff should:

- be aware of the systems in their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. As a minimum this Annex and the child protection policy should be shared with staff at induction;
- receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (including online safety) (for example, via emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively;
- know the identity of the designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) and how to contact them;
- know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused or neglected. This includes understanding they should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone else about a report of abuse, as this is unlikely to be in the best interests of the child; and,
- should be able to reassure all 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.

## What school and college staff should look out for

### Abuse and neglect

4. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect, including exploitation, so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
5. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

### Forms of abuse and neglect

6. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused by other children or adults, in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

7. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

8. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

9. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Females can also be abusers as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.

10. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

11. All staff should be aware that child sexual and child criminal exploitation are forms of child abuse.

### Safeguarding issues

12. All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>8</sup> (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

### Peer on peer abuse

13. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

14. All staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment;
- non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

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<sup>8</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. UKCIS provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

## **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

15. Staff working with children should maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.
16. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
17. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their school or college's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). In the absence of the designated safeguarding lead staff should speak to a member of the school or college's senior leadership team.
18. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on next steps, including who else, if anyone, in the school or college should be informed and whether to pass a concern to children's social care and/or the police. In some instances, staff may be expected to support the children social care assessment process. If this is the case, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will support them.

## **Why is all of this important?**

19. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective and immediate action. Examples of poor practice includes failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect.

## **What school and college staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children**

20. If staff have safeguarding concerns about another member of staff (including volunteers, supply staff, tradespersons and visitors) they should speak to the head teacher or to another member of the school's or college's senior leadership team.

## **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college**

21. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's or college's safeguarding regime, and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.
22. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be in place for concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team. Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with their employer or feel that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800028 0285 – 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

## Appendix 2 – Definitions, signs and indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect

If you are concerned about possible abuse, please speak to the setting's or OPCC Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will make the decision to contact Children's or Adult's Social Care Services or the Police. It is not our responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, but it is our responsibility to act on our concerns.

Physical Abuse	Signs and indicators may include:
<p>A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.</p> <p>Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multiple bruising/ scratching, adult bite marks, outline bruising (e.g. belt, hand, finger tips), bruises to the eyes and ears;</li><li>• Burns and scalds, cigarette burns;</li><li>• difficulty in moving limbs;</li><li>• blood in the white of the eye;</li><li>• injuries to 'not-yet mobile' babies;</li><li>• injury to the mouth;</li><li>• drowsiness from head injury or poisoning;</li><li>• aggressive or withdrawn behaviour;</li><li>• poor concentration.</li></ul>
Emotional Abuse	Signs and indicators may include:
<p>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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.</p> <p>It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• self-harm;</li><li>• developmental delay;</li><li>• eating disorders;</li><li>• poor self-image;</li><li>• unwillingness to join in;</li><li>• fear of failure, lack of confidence;</li><li>• few friends;</li><li>• low self-esteem;</li><li>• may bully others;</li><li>• difficulty in forming relationships;</li><li>• fear of new situations;</li><li>• obsessive rocking/ thumb sucking;</li><li>• attention seeking behaviour;</li><li>• witnessing domestic violence;</li><li>• frozen watchfulness.</li></ul>

<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	Signs and indicators may include:
<p>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.</p> <p>The abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse as can other children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• injuries to genital and or anal area;</li> <li>• sexually transmitted disease;</li> <li>• unwanted pregnancy;</li> <li>• bruises, scratches, burns or bites;</li> <li>• eating disorders;</li> <li>• self-harm;</li> <li>• bleeding from the vagina or anus;</li> <li>• pain in passing urine or faeces;</li> <li>• persistent discharge;</li> <li>• frequent masturbation;</li> <li>• wetting, soiling, smearing excreta;</li> <li>• sexual awareness inappropriate to developmental stage;</li> <li>• acting out sexual activity;</li> <li>• aggression/ withdrawal.</li> </ul>
<b>Neglect</b>	Signs and indicators may include:
<p>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.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); or</li> <li>• protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; or</li> <li>• ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or</li> <li>• ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.</li> </ul> <p>It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delayed physical development;</li> <li>• underweight and small structure;</li> <li>• overweight or obese;</li> <li>• chronic nappy rash;</li> <li>• slow growth;</li> <li>• frequently smelly;</li> <li>• persistently dirty;</li> <li>• persistent hunger;</li> <li>• impairment of health;</li> <li>• infections slow to clear;</li> <li>• persistent head lice;</li> <li>• low self-esteem;</li> <li>• destructive tendencies;</li> <li>• stealing or hiding food.</li> </ul>

**Bullying** is a deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or sustained over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure and may have been singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

## Appendix 3 – Types of adult at risk abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Adults at risk may be abused by a wide range of people including family members, professional staff, care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends, and individuals who deliberately exploit their vulnerability. Abuse may occur when an adult at risk lives alone or with a relative, within nursing, residential or day care settings, hospitals and other places assumed to be safe, or in public places.

The following are examples of abusive or exploitative behaviours which could give rise to a safeguarding concern:

**Physical abuse** - including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

**Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and so called ‘honour’ based violence. This may not happen in a structured setting, such as a club or centre, but this could be occurring in a home situation.

**Sexual abuse** - including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, exposure to pornography or witnessing sexual acts and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented.

**Psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, ‘gaslighting’ and coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, such as wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. People with learning disabilities or dementia are particularly vulnerable to this type of abuse; sometimes by perpetrators who befriend victims with the intention of exploiting them.

**Discriminatory abuse** - including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment due race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide appropriate health and social care and support or educational services; the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. Self-neglect might indicate that the person is not receiving adequate support or care or could be an indication of poor mental health.

**Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one-off incidents to on-going ill-treatment arising from structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Modern slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

### **Recognising abuse**

Patterns of abuse vary and include:

- Serial abusing in which the perpetrator seeks out and ‘grooms’ victims. Sexual abuse and financial abuse often follow a sustained pattern of behaviour
- Long-term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between partners or generations; or
- Opportunistic abuse, such as theft occurring because money or valuable items have been left lying around.

**Signs and indicators** are similar to those for children and young people (see Appendix 2) but may also include:

- Self-harming;
- A person’s belongings or money go missing;
- The person is not attending or no longer enjoying their sessions;
- A person has a fear of a particular group or individual;
- An allegation – someone tells you or another person that they are being abused.