

Safeguarding Children Policy



September 2016

“Treasure Each Individual”

Nothing is more important at Mordiford CE School, than ensuring our children are safe and that they feel safe.

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1. Introduction

In line with the values and ethos of Mordiford CE Primary School promoting the health and well being of all our pupils is of great importance to the school. Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children
- Children who are and feel safe make more successful learners
- Representatives of the whole-school community of pupils, parents, staff and governors will be involved in policy development and review
- Policies will be reviewed annually

We recognise our moral, spiritual and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We adopt the attitude "that it could happen here" therefore all staff are ever alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. We recognise the importance of early help and aim to provide support as soon as a problem emerges at any point. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB).www.herefordshire.gov.uk/hscb

Principles

- The school will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all school activity
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance
- All pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the senior management of the school who will follow this policy guidance in doing so

Aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children

3. Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe, effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully. Our Safeguarding Policy is underpinned by the statutory guidance from [Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016](#)

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016](#).) In respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child refers to all young people within Mordiford CE Primary School

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

4. Context

[Section 175 of the Education Act 2002](#) requires Local Authorities and the governors of schools to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with children, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and to recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in the school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and understand the local procedures for reporting and acting upon their concerns (see section 6 for further guidance on this).

5. Key personnel:

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** for child protection in this school is:

Miss Kerri Finney, Head teacher

Trained to DSL Specialist Level 5.3.15

Trained in Safer Recruitment 23.6.15

Contact details: 01432 870258

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)** and **Designated Teacher for Looked after Children (DLAC)** in this school is:

Mr Richard Foster, Deputy Head teacher

Trained to DSL Specialist Level 6.7.15

Trained as Designated Looked After Child Lead 15.9.15

Contact details: 01432 870258

Richard Foster liaises with the Local Authority Virtual Head teacher for LAC, who is currently Hilary Jones; she has responsibility for the progress of LAC children

The **nominated Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding** for this school is:

Mrs Jo Drummond-Jones

Contact details: 01432 870258

Chair of Governors Rev Chris Moore

Trained in Safer Recruitment 29 .9.15

6. Roles and responsibilities

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements and this person is named in this policy guidance. The local authority maintains a list of all **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)** for safeguarding and child protection. It is imperative that all school staff understand the role of the DSL and this aspect must be included in all staff safeguarding training.

The school has ensured that the DSL:

- is appropriately trained, at least annually
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of HSCB procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, but kept separately from the child's general file
- refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedures.
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a child with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the child's social worker is informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences in accordance with local procedure and guidance
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- liaises with the nominated governor and head teacher (where the role is not carried out by the head teacher) as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- makes this policy available to parents.

The **Deputy Designated Lead** is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The governing body ensures that the school has:

- a DSL for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken the approved HSCB training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training

- child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with HSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher
- Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance (see: Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016)
- A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Head Teacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at least annually. The DSL should receive updated training at two-yearly intervals and keep up to date with safeguarding developments at least annually.
- Arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher. An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses or areas of concern will be rectified without delay.

The Head Teacher:

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that child's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

7. Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the school community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving children in decision-making which affects them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in child's behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse

- reading and understanding all of the school's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact, e-safety plans and information-sharing
- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

8. Abuse of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards all children must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#), it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.

The school's Code of Ethical Practice sets out our expectations of staff.
(See appendix 1)

9. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children are at increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs: Mordiford recognises that these children can provide additional safeguarding challenges as additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect can exist. Staff must ensure that indicators of possible abuse are not just related to the child's impairment without further investigation, children tend to be disproportionately impacted by things such as bullying without showing outward signs and there are often barriers to communication to overcome.
- looked after children (LAC): we recognise that the most common reason for a child becoming LAC is as a result of abuse and/or neglect.

We aim to have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC safe.

- living in a known domestic abuse situation
- affected by known parental substance misuse
- affected by known parental mental illness
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- vulnerable to radicalisation
- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.

10. Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support the children and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

11. Complaints procedure in respect of poor practice

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or

belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the head teacher and governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and competencies procedures.

12. If you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's Whistle Blowing Policy (appendix 2) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Staff can access the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285. All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the Head teacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors. Complaints about the Chair of Governor should be taken to then Local Authority Designated Officer. Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Paul Rooney 01432 260554

13. Staff who are the subject of an allegation

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some adults do pose a serious risk to children's welfare and safety and we must act on every allegation made. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the head teacher. Allegations against the Head teacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016, Part Four (pp 40-49)

For further information on managing allegations against staff contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Lynn Wheatley 01432 260554 or contact the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Tel. 01432 260800

Allegations of abuse made against other children

Mordiford School recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers and we aim to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse can take different forms and this type of abuse is never tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. The school uses Department for education advice on searching screening and confiscation. Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) has recently updated their sexting guidance which we will follow once it is published. We recognise that there are gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

14. Staff training

Mordiford CE Primary is committed to the provision of training for staff in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding. All staff, including kitchen staff and cleaners, are trained at the Universal Level by the Head teacher, DSL. Designated personnel are trained to Specialist Level by outside agencies.

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and governors will receive training during their induction.

All staff, including the Head teacher (unless the Head teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

15. Safer recruitment

Our school strives to create a culture of safe recruitment by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016, Part Three (pp 23-27)

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant’s suitability to work with children
- be interviewed.
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- verify the right to work in the UK
- If the candidate has lived outside of the UK further checks are required
- provide evidence of mental and physical fitness to work
- be checked through the Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service
- be responsible for disclosing if they personally or by association anyone living with them have been:

1. cautioned of certain violent and sexual criminal offences* against children and adults
2. have grounds relating to the care of children
3. have registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or being disqualified from private fostering (* a full list of qualifying offences is kept in the school office)

All new members of staff, including students, will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own safeguarding and child protection training needs. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy (see: appendix 3). All volunteers receive a copy of the school's leaflet on Child Protection on arrival and that they know the name of the DSL.

Visitors to school do not require a DBS certificate; visitors do not have unsupervised access to children.

16. Extended school and off-site arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures. When our children attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

17. Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect children we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.
- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school
- The use of mobile phone cameras/personal cameras is not permitted
- Use of cameras is not permitted in toilet/cloakroom areas
- Personal use of mobile phones by staff member/adult must take place during break and when the adult is not in contact with children
- All adults in school should be aware of mobile phone misuse and report to the DSL any concerns

(For consent form please see appendix 4, see also ICT Policy/E Safety)

18. E-Safety

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

Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and children are not allowed to access these sites whilst in school. Some children will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home and we regularly put information on newsletters for parents stressing the need for monitoring usage.

At Mordiford CE Primary School we are aware of how social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are becoming increasingly popular as a way of communicating and sharing information. We advise staff to consider, when publishing information, that they ask themselves if they would feel comfortable with a current or prospective employer, colleague, pupil or parent viewing their content.

It is advised not to allow parents or children and young people to be added as friends. Personal use of online networking sites whilst at work is not encouraged. In line with safeguarding procedures, no comments should be made with reference to the school, its staff, governors, pupils, families or any persons associated with it or events.

For more information on e-safety see the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board website and school's E Safety Policy.

19. Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives

or matches within reach of an unattended toddler. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues- some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical 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

Emotional abuse

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 for meeting the needs of another person. 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 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, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

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, touching outside of clothing. They may 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 omit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

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 misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

[\(Definitions taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016\)](#)

We also are aware of our responsibility to be vigilant to the possibility of children being at risk of:

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying is thought to result in up to 12 child suicides each year.

All incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Head teacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures. (See school Anti-Bullying Policy)

Child Missing from Education

All children regardless of their circumstances are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs that they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing from education in their area. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Mordiford CE School aims to use procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including child sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risk of their going missing in the future. Mordiford CE Primary School has appropriate safeguarding measures in place to respond if a child goes missing from education. Staff are

alert to signs and individual triggers when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. The school has, as law requires, both an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils are placed on both registers. School will notify the Local Authority of any pupil who is to be deleted from the register as soon as the grounds for deletion are met:

- written notification that the child has been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- child has ceased to attend school and is no longer living within reasonable distance from school
- child has been deemed mentally or physically unfit to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- child is in custody for period of more than four months due to a final court order and it is reasonable to believe that they will be returning at the end of that period
- child has been permanently excluded

School will also notify the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting and harmful consequences. All staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), or already having suffered FGM.

There is a range of potential indicators that child may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child. Victims of FGM are more likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Staff should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place or already taken place can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Mandatory Reporting Duty

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** along with social workers and healthcare professionals, 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. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information and guidance can be found at- [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedure information](#)

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. 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 HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Indicators

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and

colleges) and pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: Handling case of forced marriage.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Domestic Violence

It is now generally acknowledged that domestic violence is a Child protection/safeguarding issue. Children who witness or experience domestic violence are likely to suffer emotional harm and may be vulnerable to other forms of abuse and bullying. Staff need to be sensitive to this fact in their dealings with these children. Information should be shared confidentially within the school on a "need to know" basis. The DSL makes the decision about who to inform.

Support for victims of domestic violence is available from West Mercia Women's Aid. Tel: 0800 7831359 wmwa.safeguarding@wmwa.cjsm.net
PO Box Hereford HR4 9WB

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

The following list outlines signs, which should raise concerns about a child. Some of these may have some other possible explanation, but a cluster of these signs should indicate consideration of possible Child Protection/safeguarding issues and should be reported:

An abused or neglected child may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits

- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour - from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns - you do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

The impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSL by the end of the day
- if the DSL is not around, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the school that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only - do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you suspect a child is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

Use the Welfare Concern form (See appendix 6) or the Pastoral Log to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section 'If a child discloses to you'.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned; you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

CAF Procedure:

The CAF procedure is designed to help professionals understand what to do if they have concerns about a child and to find out whether the child has additional needs or needs that mean they have been, or are likely to be, significantly harmed.

In Herefordshire we are clear that children with different levels of need will be responded to appropriately by the range of agencies who work with them. The information below is based on national government guidance and shows how different levels of need should be addressed.

Level 1 - Universal services

No additional action needed

Level 2 - Targeted services (additional needs)

Consider assessment using CAF (CAF advisors can help with this)

Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Levels 3/4 - Specialist Services (acute/ complex needs)

Consider referral using multi-agency referral form Appendix F

For detailed information on making a referral and the form contact the Herefordshire CAF team: Bath Street, Hereford HR1 2GY

The Child Protection Safeguarding Conference (ICPC) is an opportunity for all professionals with the family to consult about how the child may best be protected and in particular, decide whether the child should be subject to a Child Protection Plan (historically this was referred to as the child being placed on the Child Protection Register).

It is clearly very important that a representative of the school attends the conference if at all possible. Details of children in receipt of a Child Protection Plan are held by the Social Care teams - these details all the children (resident in the area) who are considered to be of continuing risk of significant harm and for whom there is a Child Protection Plan. The first Child Protection Safeguarding

Review Conference will be called within three months and reconvened every six months to ensure that momentum is maintained in the process of safeguarding the registered child.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP), a Key Worker (Social Worker) and a Core Group will be appointed. Whenever possible a representative of the school should be a Core Group member. An outline Child Protection Safeguarding Plan will be drawn up and the Core Group will be responsible for meeting regularly to implement it.

When a child is subject to a CPP, the school's designated member of staff must decide who needs to be told. This should be on a 'need to know' basis, but should include personnel who monitor attendance, who have day-to-day responsibility for their education and any pastoral staff who may be working with the child.

Reporting Suspicions or Allegations of Child Abuse

Every member of staff has a duty to promote the protections and wellbeing of the children in our care. Any member of staff who is told of or who has witnessed, any incident or suspicion of child abuse in respect of a child at Mordiford CE Primary School, must report the information immediately to the DSL. This can be done verbally or on the Welfare Concern form (see appendix)

Child abuse to be reported includes:

- abuse by a member of staff or adult within Mordiford CE Primary School
- abuse at home reported to staff by a child
- abuse by a stranger
- abuse by one child by another

Staff should not investigate reports of abuse themselves but immediately report to the DSL.

Alleged victims, perpetrators; those reporting abuse and others involved **should not** be questioned. The only matter to clarify is that there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse. When you report a Child Protection Safeguarding concern you will be asked to put your concerns in writing, the DSL may ask for some detail in order to ascertain the immediate actions necessary to ensure the child and / or other children are protected from further risk.

The Children's Act requires that local safeguarding procedures are followed and these are designed to avoid unnecessary or repeated interviews or medical examinations, to involve the police (as appropriate) and to avoid contamination of evidence by interviewees, which may have inadvertently led a witness.

It is important to acknowledge that the procedure will inevitably lead to some investigations being triggered, which do not substantiate the allegation being made, as well as those which do. However it is preferable to have some false alarms than fail to initiate specialist investigation of real abuse.

We all have a duty to protect children.

Any staff member to whom allegation of child abuse is made or observes such abuse must:

Listen to a child that is telling or indicating that something abusive has happened to him/her or someone else.

Allow the child to tell you as much as they want to **without** interrupting. Remember you will need to record this.

Limit any questions to clarify what happened and **strictly avoid** leading the child by making suggestions or introducing your own ideas in the questions. Do not try to investigate further.

Tell the informing child that you will make sure that the right people will follow up what they have said.

Reassure the child that a person of their choice will support them if at all possible.

Ask them if there is anything that they immediately need to make them feel safe and assure them that staff will try as far as practicable to follow their wishes.

Refer the matter immediately, with all relevant details, to the DSL

Record in writing as soon possible what you have been told/observed, using the exact words by the informant and yourself including any questions and answers on the school's 'Cause for Concern and Incident' form (Appendix D).

Confidentiality

Children should not be promised confidentiality as there may be a disclosure of alleged abuse and it will be necessary to share that information as part of the Child Protection/Safeguarding process. The school cannot protect the child; only social services and the police have the power necessary to carry out enquiries.

Action by Designated Members of Staff for Child Protection Safeguarding
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

On receiving details of an allegation of child abuse the Designated Member of Staff for Child Protection/Safeguarding must first of all take any necessary steps needed to protect any child from risk of immediate harm. If in doubt as to whether the concern raised is clearly a Child Protection/Safeguarding referral, the designated member of staff can discuss any concerns with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) at the local authority, who have responsibility for Child Protection/Safeguarding issues or the Lead Nurse for Child Protection/Safeguarding. They will advise on the most appropriate course of action.

If it is established that this is a matter for Child Protection/Safeguarding Investigation, the Designated Members of Staff for Child Protection/Safeguarding should immediately complete the relevant paperwork for the MASH Team (copy attached). Any referral is made within the 'Common Assessment Framework'. This is the national agreed and applied model for assessing the needs of children and young people. It has a child-centred approach and looks at development and environmental factors as well as family circumstances in assessing the needs of the children.

Notifying Parents:

If the school has a concern about a child we will share these concerns with parents/carers. However, if sharing these concerns puts the child at risk of significant or further harm we will seek advice from Herefordshire Council within the MASH team. Refer to cards in staffroom and office and HSCB poster of contact details.

Following a referral, MASH have a duty to decide (within one day) on action to be taken and to inform the referrer of that decision. If deemed to be a Child Protection Safeguarding issue a core assessment will be carried out and information about the child will be sought from school and other agencies. This all depends on if the case is seen as a section 47 or section 17. An initial assessment maybe conducted or a strategy meeting, if it is section 47, prior to core assessment.

Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a Strategy Discussion/Meeting will be called. A representative from the school should attend. If a school representative is unable to attend, documents will be sent to the meeting and an educational representative from MASH would represent the school. This is the expected procedure if the school had made the referral.

Many cases are resolved with advice and support to parents; other cases however may require much longer involvement. Where identified risk remains, court proceedings may be taken or arrangements made for the child to be cared for by other members of the family or foster carers. Where children continue to live in situation of risk, a Child Protection Safeguarding Conference may be called.

Support given to the child or children making an allegation and their parents

The DSL will discuss and follow the Assessment Team Manager's advice in relation to:

- Any need for medical examination or treatment for the child. (In all but urgent situations this will be further discussed at a strategy meeting).
- Any immediate protection which may be needed for a child who has been abused, a child who has been given information about abuse or a child against which an allegation has been made. (Any of these may now be at risk).
- Any further support deemed necessary and appropriate for the child, other children who may be at risk and their families.

The support offered to a child making an allegation will almost certainly involve allocating an appropriate member of staff, as far as possible, a person chosen by the child to stay with him/her. The DSL in consultation with Social Services will ascertain whether any other person should have information about the allegation. Staff supporting a child should ensure that they listen and support the child but do not probe or ask questions, if the child does disclose more information the staff should record what they say in writing. Staff should also record in writing any unusual behaviour displayed by the child following the allegation.

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

Preventing Radicalisation

Preventing children from radicalisation is part of Mordiford CE Primary School's wider safeguarding duty, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. Our definition of radicalisation is "The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism"

We recognise that there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Prevent:

The school fulfils its duty under [section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) by implementing the [Prevent duty as outlined in the advice for schools on the Prevent Duty DfE June 2015](#)

To fulfil our duty Mordiford CE Primary School will:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology
- Our safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies of the HSCB, thus building on existing local partnership arrangements
- All staff have received the Channel General Awareness Model training, which equips them with the awareness to identify children at risk and to challenge extremist ideas
- We ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school, suitable filtering is in place. Our e-safety curriculum reinforces the need for online safety with all pupils

Channel:

Staff understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme, which focusses on providing support at an early stage to people who have been identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The school will cooperate with the multi-agency panel if required to do so, as a recognised partner of the Channel programme.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with [Data Protection Act 1998](#) principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights

- secure

Record of concern forms and other written information in the Pastoral Log will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the head teacher.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the Head teacher and the Chair of Governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

Related Safeguarding school policies

- Anti-bullying
- Appropriate physical contact
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Complaints procedure
- Confidentiality
- E Safety (see ICT Policy)
- First Aid

- Grievance and disciplinary
- Health and Safety
- Managing allegations
- Missing children
- Personal and intimate care
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- PSHE
- Safer recruitment
- SEND
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Whistle blowing

The NSPCC website contains a great deal of useful information:

www.nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline : 0800 028 0285

Schools can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

- Child missing from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Bullying, including cyber bullying
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender based violence/violence against women (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental health
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking

