



Enfield County School for Girls

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

July 2021

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Introduction

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 gives maintained schools a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The DCSF publication 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings' (March 2009), and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (April 2013) provide clear advice on appropriate behaviours for all adults working with children.

This policy and our protocols and practices are fully informed by DfE guidance documents 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2020 and Working Together to Safeguarding Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children July 2018.

Links to other policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Behaviour for Learning Policy, the British Values Policy, the Attendance Policy, the School Visitor Policy, the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and the Equalities Policy.

School Statement

We at Enfield County School for Girls believe every child has the right to feel safe and secure and should be protected from any circumstance or practice which causes any sort of harm.

We recognise we have a duty of care and responsibility towards the students in our care and we will carry out this duty with the fullest regard for the safety and well-being of our students throughout the school day, during extra-curricular activities, school visits and, as far as possible, in the community. We will provide students with a range of opportunities to develop their own sense of safety and equip them with skills to flourish in an ever-changing world. To ensure this all staff, in whatever capacity (including visitors and governors), will act proactively to ensure the welfare of all students, especially if they believe a student is at risk of significant harm. All children have the right to be happy and to live their lives free of any form of abuse, threat or danger and we will take seriously any allegation or concern relating to any student and act upon it quickly and in line with statutory guidelines.

Enfield County School for Girls is a listening school and all students experience a 'open door' policy with regards to sharing worries, concerns or difficulties; this is most evident in the Pastoral system which is unique to Enfield County, however, students are encouraged to talk to any teacher or adult they feel comfortable with and all staff are encouraged to develop their pastoral and safeguarding skills. **Please note: we cannot offer secrecy to a child and we will act on any information which suggests a child is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing significant harm.**

If we have knowledge or suspicions that a child is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or psychological harm or neglect either at home or in the community then we will take appropriate action in accordance with procedures issued by the Safeguarding Partners (previously called the Local Safeguarding Children Board). We at Enfield County for Girls are trained and informed in matters of identifying and reporting of safeguarding



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concerns and we have developed rigorous structures and systems in school. At Enfield County for Girls we have adopted a culture of vigilance and we take a proactive approach to student safety and well-being.

As a consequence, we as a school:

- assert that all members of the school are an integral part of the safeguarding process
- accept and assert that safeguarding children is an appropriate responsibility and function for all members of staff, compatible with their primary role as educators
- will ensure that all staff on site are all alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of suffering harm and that all members of staff are clear on how to report their concerns to a designated member of staff
- will designate a senior member of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and reporting child protection issues; this person will liaise with the relevant agencies and oversee the care of students in school
- the designated member of staff will share information on a strictly 'need to know' basis to protect the rights and dignity of the child
- will ensure all members of staff on site receive regular safeguarding training in compliance with the recommendations by the Safeguarding Partners and that staff will receive regular refreshers and updates on issues that may arise of a safeguarding nature. At Enfield County School for Girls all staff have child protection training every 2 years
- all designated child protection staff members will undergo full training every 2 years
- will ensure that we safeguard students' welfare by addressing and educating students on issues of personal safety in the community and online
- will safeguard students in school by addressing bullying especially when aggravated by issues of sexuality, racial or cultural factors, disability or special educational needs
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection process that all adults who work here, whether permanent or temporary are suitable to work with children
- will act swiftly and appropriately on any allegation made against a member of staff in accordance with Safeguarding Partner guidelines

Designated Members of Staff

Ms Scott is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Mrs Helen O'Brien is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the absence of both Ms Scott and Mrs O'Brien any other trained member of the designated senior team can ensure that processes and procedures are in place and that policies are followed.

Due to the split site nature of Enfield County School for Girls, it is deemed appropriate that we have several designated child protection trained staff. We have five designated senior leaders responsible for child protection who take responsibility for quality assurance: Ms J Gumbrell, Headteacher, Ms J Foster, Deputy Headteacher, Mrs O'Brien, Deputy Headteacher, and Ms J Scott, Senior Assistant Headteacher.

All Progress and Achievement Leaders and the LAC Co-ordinator have received Designated Child Protection training.



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School Context

All our staff are aware of the particular contexts and challenges that are present in ensuring the safety of our students. London is a thriving and exciting city and whilst we celebrate the vibrancy and diversity of Enfield, we also consider in parallel the day to day challenges it can bring to our students. Staff are given regular information on concerns relevant to our school community via the weekly school bulletin, emails, training and during staff meetings and briefings. Most of our staff have strong links to London and indeed Enfield and they are knowledgeable about the challenges and difficulties faced by our students and the need to safeguard students beyond the school gates. Our school has strong links within the local area; with other schools, the metropolitan police, local businesses, health partners, youth clubs, church and religious groups and local residents. It is this network of communication that ensures we are supporting students and keeping abreast of issues that may affect their safety and wellbeing and we will make reasonable adjustments and employ strategies where necessary. Particular contexts relevant to our community are:

Housing:

Socio-economic issues in the capital means that a proportion of our students may be living in temporary or overcrowded accommodation or may experience homelessness. As a school we will always support these students by making any reasonable adjustments to lessen the burden and help reduce the impact on their education to ensure equality of opportunity. For example, we ensure the library is open before and after school to give students a place to work and study or may provide students with extension deadlines or extra materials to help when they are experiencing severe difficulties with housing. We will make all possible efforts to keep in touch with students who may stop attending school however if we are unable to make contact we will report the student to the local authority and Education Welfare Officer as 'missing in education'.

Gangs, Knife Crime and 'County Lines':

Unfortunately, London has experienced a growth in gang violence and knife crime in recent years. Our students are affected by this in a number of ways; many students may live in areas or travel through areas where there have been incidents of stabbings which can adversely affect a student's feeling about their community or environment, or a student may have friends or family members who have been exposed to or are victims of gang violence. In these incidences we will offer support to families and make sure that students feel safe in school and are given the opportunity to discuss their fears or anxieties. The issues around gang and knife violence are discussed in assemblies, form time and through the curriculum where appropriate. We are vigilant about the issues of 'county lines' and how young people in London are vulnerable to criminal exploitation. The senior leadership team work with the police, attend workshops and seminars to be knowledgeable about serious crime and all staff are trained to be vigilant to the signs that a student may be at risk of being subjected to criminal exploitation and violent crime.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Girls and young women are increasingly at risk of child sexual exploitation or coercive and controlling sexual relationships. Staff have received training on the signs of CSE and the senior leadership team work closely with our Safeguarding partnership in the community to ensure that we are vigilant in supporting and educating students about the risks. Any concerns are passed immediately to the police and social services. Senior staff are active in the community and students are always encouraged to travel straight home from school and not congregate in the community.



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Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage

Enfield County School for Girls is multi-cultural and multi-faith environment we will always be sensitive to the needs of all our students and their communities. We are a listening school and we take pride in the diversity of our students and the rich cultural heritage that our students enjoy. With this in mind we are also aware of the issues around family honour and shame and we discuss these topics freely in subjects such as Religious Studies, form time, Personal Development or in debating groups across the Key Stages. We are particularly vigilant to the potential of honour being distorted within communities and the possibility that students may be exposed to threat, danger or coercion and we create a culture of openness and communication to negate risk and encourage disclosure. When a student is deemed at risk or there is any suspicion of either forced marriage or honour based abuse the DSL will take immediate action in the form of an Early Help Assessment form or contact with the police.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is illegal to carry out FGM in the UK. It is also a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to perform FGM overseas or take their child abroad to have FGM carried out. The maximum penalty for FGM is 14 years' imprisonment. The Progress and Achievement Leaders (PALs) have had training in recognising FGM and the whole school staff are aware of the issue of female genital mutilation and that it is a serious crime. All staff are aware of their statutory duty to report suspected cases of FGM to the police immediately. Key pastoral, support and attendance staff are particularly vigilant to the potential of FGM and are alert to the signs that a student may be at risk of FGM, for example the 'cutting season' during the summer and Christmas holidays.

Extremism and Radicalisation

All staff have received full training in Prevent by the Local Authority and key staff have received refresher training and updates in order to disseminate information to the whole school community. Staff are trained to be vigilant to signs that a student may be vulnerable to developing extremist views and staff are alert to the signs of radicalisation and extremism. These views may include a distorted view of Islam or far-right views. When a member of staff has concerns that any student may be at risk of radicalisation they are to refer to the Designated Leads immediately.

Students are safeguarded from the threat of radicalisation and extremism through a collaborative approach to building tolerance and respect and an adherence to fundamental British values. Students are exposed to a range of ideologies through discussions in a range of subjects, particularly Religious Studies, PSHE and Moral Issues and Values. Students are taught about the threat of extremism and radicalisation in sensitively prepared resources delivered in assemblies and form time. Students are encouraged to be open minded and thoughtful and are aware of the damage of narrow or intolerant ideologies; Enfield County School for Girls is a Holocaust Beacon school, teaching all students about the threat of extremism from a historical perspective.

For more comprehensive information on the risks to children please see Appendix 2 – Definitions and indications of abuse



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Procedures

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with national and local procedures.

At Enfield County School for Girls:

- all members of the designated team have appropriate training and will be available in the other's absence
- immediate action will always be taken to refer serious safeguarding concerns to the relevant agencies
- the designated team act as a source of advice and information and will support staff to carry out their safeguarding duties
- all staff are trained to identify possible indicators of abuse and harm (see appendix 1)
- members of staff who suspect any safeguarding issue will report to the designated lead or deputy via the Safeguarding Cause for Concern form
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in her absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will contact parents, seek advice or make referrals based on information received on MyConcern
- all new members of staff will attend Child Protection training as part of their induction into the school and will receive a copy of the Safeguarding Policy.
- visitors to Enfield County are expected to sign in and provide photo ID at reception and, where necessary, be given a named visitor's badge.
- Visitors who present relevant and up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) documentation will receive a green lanyard. Visitors without appropriate DBS clearance will receive a red lanyard
- Visitors who have not been DBS cleared and are wearing a red lanyard must be accompanied by a cleared member of staff around the school building at all times
- our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the designated staff are to ensure the very best outcomes for our students and are in line with guidelines set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018). The designated governor and the lead and deputy designated safeguarding staff meet termly to report on safeguarding matters and review current practices thus ensuring we meet our responsibilities most effectively.

At Enfield County School for Girls the designated team

- Have weekly formal meetings to track, monitor and ensure support for students who have known or previous safeguarding concerns
- will make a referral to an external agency where there is reason to believe that a child is experiencing or may be at risk of experiencing significant harm



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- will refer matters to the police where there is suspicion that a serious crime has been committed (a serious crime could be; possession of a knife, possession of a controlled substance, circulating or producing indecent images or a serious instance of assault or bullying)
- will liaise with the Headteacher and the senior leadership team to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding of students
- keep written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and ensure that confidential records are kept securely and are separate from pupil records
- ensure that any pupil currently with a child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services
- we maintain good working relationships with all outside agencies to foster co-operation and a 'joined up' approach to safeguarding and monitoring of children's well-being

The following safeguarding procedures will be overseen by the designated teachers but will constitute the responsibilities of the wider school staff members:

At Enfield County School for Girls:

- we will ensure that parents and carers are aware of this policy and its availability on the school website
- we will ensure that 'Young Carers' are identified as far as possible and that they are appropriately supported and monitored in school
- we will monitor and ensure the well-being and learning of all our 'Looked After' students by assigning a LAC co-ordinator who will regularly review the progress of our Looked After students and report back to the senior leadership team and the school governors
- where students are new on roll we will make adequate steps to obtain any safeguarding/child protection records pertaining to that student and ensure that they are sent securely and confidentially to the designated lead as soon as possible. Similarly, if a student leaves Enfield County School for Girls we will ensure all safeguarding/child protection records are sent securely to the student's new school
- will ensure both school sites and outdoor spaces are well maintained and kept safe and free from obstacles and materials that may cause harm
- will ensure that visitor access is monitored and controlled as far as possible by fob entry, security doors and gates and clear visitor procedures
- if a student leaves school permanently and we do not receive notice from a destination school then we will classify the student as 'missing in education' and report to the Local Authority



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- the school attendance team will monitor attendance and report and refer any inconsistencies and concerns in school attendance that may suggest a safeguarding concern, for example; fabricated or induced illness or child sexual exploitation
- the school attendance team will be alert to the possibility of forced marriage, female genital mutilation or radicalisation and will report immediately any concerns relating to requests for trips overseas or holidays and will refer any concerns immediately to the designated lead
- where a student is educated partially or fully at another establishment, for example; Alternative School Provision we will ensure that the establishment is registered with the Local Authority. The school where the student is based will take responsibility for leading on child protection issues
- work experience placements are organised by external agencies who comply with safeguarding guidelines and health and safety legislation
- school trips and visits are organised in line with Safeguarding Partners guidelines and that all appropriate risk assessments are carried out.
- where residential trips are organised the companies used are responsible for the vetting and checking of the DBS records of their staff
- we will ensure that necessary safeguards are in place within individual departments where students may come into contact with specialist equipment, machinery or chemicals and students will be expected to wear appropriate safety wear and adhere to strict safety guidelines at all times
- all members of staff will have read and understood with part 1 and Annex A of the DfE guidance document; 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2020 and we have signed records of staff to confirm this. All staff are advised to read the full document.

The Designated Governor

The Designated Governor for safeguarding is Mr A McNamara

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

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

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

- We carry out our duty to safeguard the welfare of its students
- members of staff and visitors are aware of the procedures within school, current practices and issues and receive adequate training on this matter
- child protection training and procedures are an integral part of the induction process for new staff at school



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- We maintain adequate records and record all instances of a safeguarding nature including instances of racism, bullying and other serious concerns
- We adhere to safer recruitment procedures in line with current LSCB guidelines
- where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are substantiated the school will take swift and appropriate disciplinary action

Safer Recruitment

In order to ensure our students are protected within school we will ensure that staff and visitors are carefully selected, vetted, trained and supervised. We follow the guidance set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE publication (September 2018).

At Enfield County School for Girls:

- we will ensure a member of every recruitment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment and selection training
- all our staff are appropriately qualified and we will verify relevant employment history and ensure any employment gaps are accounted for
- relevant checks are made to ensure all staff employed are safe to work with children in compliance with Safer Recruitment requirements, including any checks under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and references are taken up prior to employment
- We ensure that all supply staff, temporary staff and volunteers comply with the all the relevant safer recruitment checks
- We have a rolling programme in place for updating our staff Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) in School. Every five years, employees are required to update their DBS so that any changes are incorporated into the Single Central Record. Employees also sign a declaration annually to confirm there is no change to their Criminal Records Information. The declaration forms part of the Code of Conduct Policy that our school has adopted from the Local Authority.

Induction and Training

All new staff will receive induction safeguarding training to alert them to the different forms of abuse and to train them on how to spot potential signs and indicators of abuse. The training will include how and who to report safeguarding concerns to and ensure full confidence in these matters.

Supply staff are given information on arrival on how and when to report concerns.

All staff are given full child protection training on a whole school basis at two yearly intervals and refresher training is provided each term for staff to attend as and when they feel necessary. All staff are encouraged to seek support and guidance from the designated team should they have particular concerns or experiences that they wish to share. Furthermore, the designated team will support each other in the implementation of the safeguarding role within school.



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All staff are informed and trained on a range of safeguarding issues, such as bullying, e-safety (including sexting and indecent images), domestic violence (including damaging and abusive teenage relationships), mental health awareness, the threat of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation (CSE) and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Other issues may be covered in training to key staff, for example the Pastoral Team or the Attendance Team with the expectation that they will disseminate information to staff through their role.

Issues key staff receives training on may include:

- Self-harm
- Eating disorders and body image
- Gangs and street crime
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Forced marriage and honour based violence
- Prevent and Radicalisation

Responding to and Managing Concerns

Staff are encouraged through regular training to maintain a 'culture of vigilance' and pass any concerns to the designated team. Members of staff and visitors are advised to communicate all concerns no matter how small to the designated team; they are not expected to investigate their concerns or suspicions themselves but to raise a concern immediately via the MyConcern link on the school website. A concern recorded on MyConcern will immediately send an email alert to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteachers. Staff can refer a concern from any device and at any time and the system is fully secure with access to the stored information only accessibly to the above team and a senior data administrator. On receiving a report the lead will then consider whether the matter will be referred to the relevant Children's Services. Immediate action will be taken to inform social services if a child is deemed to be at significant risk.

Staff reporting a serious concern, such as sexual or physical abuse are requested to alert either school office immediately by informing the office staff that they have reported a serious concern via MyConcern. The office staff will then contact the DSL by telephone.

Early Help Assessment Form

Referrals made directly to Enfield Children's Portal at Children's Services will be made by Ms Scott or another trained member of the team via the Early Help Assessment Form. All completed forms will be logged and recorded securely and confidentially and any electronic copies of the form will be sent via a secure email account. Parents and carers will not necessarily be informed of a referral if a child is deemed to be at significant risk; similarly information and data can be shared amongst external agencies and professionals without the consent of parents and carers where there is deemed to be a serious safeguarding concern.



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Referrals to other services will be made using the Early Help Form and may require parent/carer permission. These forms may be completed by the Pastoral Team under the guidance of the Designated Team and will provide support to the child from a range of outside agencies.

Contacting the Police

In the event of a criminal act taking place on school premises or if police assistance is required, Enfield County School for Girls will refer to the NSPCC guidance document 'When to Call the Police'

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

We will also inform our Safer School Officer

Students with Outside Agency Support

Over the course of their school life students may at times have support from outside agencies that may provide individual support for the student, their families and help ensure their safety and well-being. The spectrum of agencies involved with children and families may change in response to government initiatives and funding. However, Enfield County School for Girls will work collaboratively and professionally with all legitimate Local Authority agencies for the benefit and well-being of their students.

Agencies may include:

- Service for Adolescents and Families in Enfield (SAFE)
- Schools Emotional Well Being Service (SEWS)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Team
- Prevent
- Parent Support Service
- Young Carers Association

The Pastoral Team comprises; the Progress and Achievement Leaders, the SEND department, the Looked After Children Co-ordinator, the Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes) and the Senior Assistant Headteacher. All colleagues in the Pastoral Team may at times liaise with agencies in order to provide the best possible support for students. The Pastoral Team will preserve the confidentiality of students whilst ensuring staff are aware of students who may be vulnerable and who will need extra support.

When a child is on a Child Protection Register, is classified as a Child in Need or may have an assessment underway under section 47 of the Children's Act 1989 the DSL will oversee the process and filter information to the Pastoral Team on a 'need to know basis'. The DSL, her deputy or a member of the Pastoral Team will represent the school at child protection conferences and core group meetings. Our DSL, her deputy, or a member of the Pastoral Team will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies when necessary and take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children.



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Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Enfield County School for Girls implemented 'MyConcern' safeguarding software from February 2020. During the period of transition to this new system staff can make referrals either through MyConcern or through the paper system on a Cause for Concern form. All Safeguarding Cause for Concern forms are kept in a locked cupboard at the Lower School site with access only being available to the Designated Child Protection Leads. Child Protection records will be kept securely and passed to other schools either via recorded delivery (paper) or through secure digital transfer via MyConcern software. Any information sent between staff on a student will be kept general and minimal and a student's first name and the initial of their surname only will be used in an email.

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

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

Any member of staff who is party to confidential information about a student must only share it if absolutely necessary and on a strictly need to know basis; advice on this can be sought from the Designated Leads.

Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, any member of staff has a duty to report any concerns that a student may be experiencing significant harm to the Designated Lead immediately.

Student Safeguarding in School

At Enfield County School for Girls students will be encouraged to develop their own sense of personal safety and an awareness of Child Protection issues. As well as being taught about topics of a safeguarding nature students will also be encouraged to discuss and evaluate issues that they may encounter in order to help them make the best choices and to help them build greater self-awareness of a range of safeguarding concerns.

Students may be introduced to safeguarding issues in:

- Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (KS3 & 4)
- Enrichment (KS5)
- Sex and Relationship Education
- Assemblies
- Workshops
- Theatre in Education visits and performances
- Form time
- Displays
- Curriculum



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- Visits
- Library resources
- Posters and leaflets
- MS Teams

Examples of recent safeguarding and child protection issues covered with students are:

- CSE
- Road safety
- Radicalisation
- FGM
- Honour based abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Healthy personal relationships
- Gang violence and knife crime

Students are also given information about outside organisations that can support them when in need, such as Childline, NSPCC or DAZU (for Young Carers).

Where a student is seen to pose a significant risk to other students we may make direct contact with the police, Children Services or another agency. Examples of behaviours deemed to put other students at significant risk could be:

- Possession of a knife or other offensive weapon
- Possession of illicit substances such as drugs
- Possession of extremist material or images
- Possession or the circulation of indecent images
- A serious assault on another pupil
- Serious bullying, homophobia or racism towards another student
- Coercing another student towards criminal or gang activity

Vulnerable Groups of Students

At Enfield County School for Girls we recognise that all the students in our care are vulnerable to some extent and that living and learning in North London can bring its own challenges. We aim to keep all of our students safe at all times however we are aware that some students may face greater challenges than others and it is the strength of our school ethos that we know our students well and will identify students who may be particularly vulnerable. We are trained and keep up to date with current concerns in the community and we are aware that students may be at risk of multiple harms outside of the school and home environment; particularly through being exposed to serious youth violence, child sexual and criminal exploitation.

The Pastoral Team at each site communicate daily and meet weekly to discuss the needs of their year group and information is passed sensitively to the whole school via weekly briefings, the school bulletin or email. Groups of students



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who are vulnerable are identified and monitored to ensure that they are achieving the best outcomes and are not falling behind from their peers. Vulnerable groups of students could include:

- Young Carers
- Bereaved students
- Student who are, or who have previously been in the care system
- Students who have a very long journey to school
- Irish Traveller Heritage students
- Transgender students
- Lesbian, bisexual and transgender students
- Students living in temporary or insecure accommodation
- Students who may be classed as Pupil Premium
- Students who have a disability
- Students who have a Special Educational Need
- Students who have mental health issues or may have self-harmed
- Students who may have a parent or carer in prison
- Students who may have been exposed to gang culture
- Students who may be vulnerable to child sexual or criminal exploitation or 'County Lines' involvement
- Students at risk of serious violence (particularly through exploitation and gang involvement)
- Students at risk of being radicalised by extremist ideas

Safeguarding and SEND

Particular consideration is given to safeguarding SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) students. Students who have special educational needs may be particularly vulnerable in communicating safeguarding concerns as they may lack speech and language skills, confidence or understanding.

There should be awareness that students who have Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) may have a range of behaviours and not all of these may be linked to their special education need or disability but may instead be the consequence of safeguarding issues. Staff who have contact with students on EHCPs should be open to the possibility that safeguarding and child protection issues can also elicit different behaviours and they must be as vigilant to this as they would any other student. Furthermore, due consideration must be given to the possibility that a student who is underachieving, presents difficult behaviour or appears to have special education needs may have safeguarding and child protection needs.

We will also be vigilant to a SEND student's susceptibility to bullying, isolation and abuse from peers and we will protect our most vulnerable students. All staff in school are aware of the particular safeguarding needs of students who may have special educational needs and disabilities and will report concerns immediately.



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Looked After Children

Looked after Children (LAC) or students who have ever been in the care system may present particular vulnerabilities and our LAC or previously LAC students are supported and cared for throughout their time here at Enfield County School for Girls. Heads of Year, the Key Stage Co-ordinators, as well as our LAC Co-ordinator keep our LAC students 'in mind' and are vigilant to any safeguarding concerns. Communication between carer, social workers, the 'Virtual School' and other professionals is frequent and encouraged to protect our LAC students and to facilitate the best outcomes, socially, emotionally and academically. As with other students, our safeguarding protocols ensure that where a LAC or previously LAC student is deemed at significant risk then the DSL will act immediately; in the case of a current LAC this will involve immediate contact to the student's social worker.

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

Mental Health

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

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

- a school counsellor
- The Enfield 'Trailblazer Scheme' of mental health trainees in school
- The Myriad Project – Oxford University research study on adolescent resiliency using mindfulness
- Mindfulness classes in the lead up to exams

We will always contact parents and carers where we have concerns about a student's mental health and we will work in partnership with families and outside agencies to seek help or guidance if we believe a student needs external support. Agencies we may refer to includes; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Service for Adolescents and Families (SAFE) or the school nurse.

Self-Harm



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

There are many myths around self-harm such as: -

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

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

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

If we continue to be concerned about a student self-harming, we will make a referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or Service for Adolescents and Families Enfield (SAFE).

Online Safety

Online safety is an ongoing and growing safeguarding challenge to all schools and we take seriously our duty of care to arm students with the skills and knowledge to be safe online. We embed the concept of online safety in school, providing reminders and information to students from primary transition and throughout their time here. Online safety is communicated regularly through assemblies, the school planner, form time and in ICT lessons, PSHCE and via our Safer Schools Officer. One of the ways we protect students in school is by having appropriate software and filters on all hardware in school and blocking access to any inappropriate sites. Students are not allowed to access their phones in school during the school day and we make them aware regularly of the perils of social media outside of school. Furthermore, parents and carers have been advised that students should not carry smartphones to and from school.

Parents and carers are given detailed information via the school website about how to protect their daughters and they are regularly updated on current online safety information via texts, emails, twitter, leaflets and talks at open evenings.

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



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

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

Peer on Peer Abuse

Staff are aware of the possibility of peer on peer abuse and the forms that it can take. Students may be subjected to abuse from peers within or outside of school and this can take the form of physical, sexual or psychological abuse. All staff are trained in how to recognise peer on peer abuse and this guidance is disseminated throughout school. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, in particular we need to be vigilant to:

- Sexual harassment and sexual abuse
- 'Sexting' (the sending and sharing of inappropriate images)
- 'Upskirting' (photographing up a student's skirt)
- Online abuse on social media
- Pressure for students to be engaged in sexual behaviour

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

- Peer on peer abuse is not part of the 'rough and tumble' of adolescence
- Any form of bullying is never 'character building'
- Leadership skills do not lend themselves to creating victims
- Victims are not to blame for their abuse

When incidents of peer on peer abuse are discovered there will be a full investigation that may involve the collecting of statements from students and staff. Staff will then ensure full support is given to all students involved; this may involve sanctions for the perpetrator/s. In some circumstances there may be a necessity to also offer support to a perpetrator as evidence shows that sometimes those who bully have themselves been victims of bullying. Mediation, restorative justice and monitoring are all methods that can be employed to prevent reoccurrence of peer on peer on abuse. In particular awareness is given to whether the victim or the perpetrator has special educational needs, is a Looked After Child or in the case of a perpetrator whether they themselves are a victim of any form of abuse. All incidences of peer on peer abuse are recorded to ensure students' conduct is monitored and reviewed.

Given the context of our school setting, we are especially vigilant about girls' roles in gangs and their exposure to child sexual exploitation and the increased threat of 'County Lines' involvement. Key staff have undergone training in all of these issues and regularly attend 'Network' meetings in the borough to keep informed of recent events and intelligence. Students



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receive information via assemblies, PSHCE (KS3), Moral Issues and Values (KS4), form time and through visiting workshops and speakers. Students are encouraged to talk to staff and our Safer Schools Officer will offer advice and support to students. When a student is deemed at significant risk an Early Help Form will be completed and support from outside agencies will be sought immediately.

Students Involved in the Court System

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

Conduct of Staff

At Enfield County School for Girls, the governors and the leadership team have a duty to ensure the professional behaviour of staff and the necessity to ensure clarity of expectations. These are set out clearly in the Staff Conduct Policy. In addition to this staff should be aware of the dangers of:

- Working alone with a student
- Physical interventions
- Cultural and gender stereotyping
- Dealing with sensitive information
- Receiving gifts from children
- Using private telephone numbers when communicating to parents/carers or student
- Contact with students via private email, social networking or social media
- Disclosing inappropriate private information
- Meeting students out of school hours or off school premises
- Giving students lifts

Members of staff can receive guidance on the above from the senior leadership team at any time.

Staff must ensure that they do not use their personal camera for taking photos during lessons or while on school journeys. The school has designated cameras to use for this purpose, which can be obtained from the school office. If staff have any concerns or questions in relation to use of cameras for school activities please speak to Ms Scott, Senior Assistant Headteacher or Mrs Sharp, School Business Leader.

Conduct of Parents/Carers

Enfield County School for Girls promotes strong links with parents and carers and is committed to the collaborative approach to supporting students. It is important for students that parents and carers and school are open and share



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information to provide the best outcomes for students; parents are always welcome to contact school but are asked to be mindful of the necessity of choosing the most appropriate method and being aware of the safeguards in place in any busy school.

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

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

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

Home School Contact

Contact between home and school is essential in keeping students safe and we comply with current DfE requirements by having at least two contacts for every student. We will endeavour to ensure all contact information is up to date and request new contact details and information should a parent or carer change their contact information. We will also make reasonable adjustments to parents and carers who may have difficulty in maintaining up to date contact information; for example, if there are housing or homelessness issues or a parent is fleeing domestic violence.

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

Alternative Provision

When a student is educated off site on what is commonly referred to as 'Alternative Provision' we will take responsibility to ensure that the educational provider meets with legal safeguarding requirements and seek written confirmation to ensure all the necessary and statutory safeguarding and health and safety checks and obligations have been met.



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Allegations Against Members of Staff

Any allegation against a member of staff or visitor will be dealt with by the Headteacher, not the Designated Lead. Allegations against staff may include:

- Committing an offence against a student
- Putting a student at risk of significant harm
- Exposing a student to extremist or radical views
- Any activity which questions a person's suitability to work with children

The incident will be dealt with in accordance with Local Authority Guidelines and in line with LSCB recommendations. If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the allegation will be dealt with by the Chair of Governors; if the allegation is against the Chair of Governors the allegation is to be dealt with by Maria Anastasi, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to decide if the allegation meets the agreed thresholds.

Allegations against member of staff – including supply staff and volunteers and all allegation will be addressed fully following the above criteria and we will exercise our legal duty to contact the police.

Whistleblowing

Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff

Staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Physical Intervention

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

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

Searching and Confiscating

On rare occasions it may be necessary to search a student's belongings or outer clothing when it is suspected that the student may have in their possession dangerous or illicit items that may cause harm to themselves or to others. On these



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occasions we will adhere to the Department for Education advice document; Searching, Screening and Confiscation (January 2018) and comply with our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Bullying

Our school is committed to prevent bullying wherever it may occur and are aware of the importance of vigilance when monitoring and safeguarding students from bullying. Bullying can have a serious impact on mental health and well-being. Repeated bullying or a single serious incident may lead to Safeguarding procedures.

Please see also: P16. 'Peer on Peer Abuse', Appendix 2 – Definitions and Signs of Abuse and our Anti-Bullying Policy and our Behaviour Policy.

Racist Incidents

There is no place for any form of racism at Enfield County School for Girls. Our school values and our diverse and inclusive school community means that fortunately racist incidents here are rare; however we are not complacent about the risks posed to students and we take any allegation of racism seriously. We recognise that one single incident of racism can cause distress, harm and seriously impact the mental health and well-being of the victim and so we will always act immediately and decisively should racism occur. Repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to safeguarding procedures. We are also trained and vigilant to the threat of Far-Right Extremism and we will refer any extremist threats immediately. All racist incidences are recorded and reported to the governors and to the Local Authority.

Please also see our Anti-Bullying Policy, our Equalities, our British Values Policy and our Behaviour Policy.

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety Policy is set out in a separate document. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of students both within and beyond the school environment, including school trips and visits, and takes account of their physical safety and other safeguarding issues.



Appendix 1 – Dealing with Disclosures: Guidance for All Staff

Reminder of our shared objectives:

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

If a student discloses to you always:

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



Appendix 2 – Definitions and indications of abuse

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

What is child abuse?

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

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

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

Physical Abuse:

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

Signs of physical abuse:

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

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



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Neglect:

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

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

Signs of neglect:

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

Emotional abuse

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

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



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

The signs of emotional abuse

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

Older children may:

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

Sexual Abuse:

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

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



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Online sexual abuse includes:

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

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

Signs of sexual abuse

Physical signs may be:

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

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

For example:

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

Child sexual exploitation

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

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



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

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

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

The signs of child sexual exploitation:

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

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

Harmful sexual behaviour

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

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

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



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Signs of harmful sexual behaviour:

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

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

Domestic abuse

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

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

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

The signs of domestic abuse

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

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



Female Genital Mutilation

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

The signs of female genital mutilation

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

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

A girl who has had FGM may:

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

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



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References/information

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

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

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

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