

The Seeds of Change KMD Ltd
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Safeguarding and Child Protection at The Seeds of Change

1. Introduction

At The Seeds of Change our responsibility for safeguarding is of the highest priority and we take our roles and work in this area very seriously. The following represents our policy for providing protection for the young people within our provision.

Each employee joining The Seeds of Change will be provided with a copy of this policy at induction and will be required to read and sign a copy to indicate that they understand the requirements laid out within. A copy will be retained on the personnel file. Updates will be shared and staff asked to re-read to refresh their knowledge at least annually in line with updates in government guidance.

1.1 Safeguarding is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

1.2 Child Protection is defined as:

- The activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. (*Working Together, DfE 2018*)

This includes, but is not limited to, safeguarding children in specific circumstances:

- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying, including online and prejudice-based bullying
- Gender based violence / violence against women and girls
- Gang / youth violence including initiation / hazing
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation and trafficking
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Fabricated / induced illness
- Online including grooming via social networking, online gaming, video messaging
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Radicalisation and /or extremist behaviour
- The impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour: e.g. Youth Produced Sexual imagery
- Substance abuse
- Domestic abuse / violence
- Forced Marriage
- Poor parenting
- Peer on peer abuse

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- Self Harm behaviours
- Children with mental health difficulties or illness
- Up skirting

1.3 The Seeds of Change is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people accessing our provision. We believe that:

- All young people have equal right to be protected from harm.
- Young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse.
- Young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs.
- Young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other.
- Young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs.
- All staff, volunteers and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours which may be perceived to be 'risky'.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, the team will ensure the young person's wishes are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- The Seeds of Change has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.

1.4 The Seeds of Change will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (*DfE 2018*)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (*DfE September 2023*)
- The procedures of Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
- The Children's Act 1989
- The Education Act 2002 s175 / s157
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (*DfE, 2015*)
- Prevent Duty, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Information sharing (*HM Govt July 2018*)
- CSE DfE Act 2017
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- UK Council for Children Internet Safety 2016

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2. Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to safeguarding young people and promoting their welfare by:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and children.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust ethos within our provision, built on mutual respect, and shared values.
- Creating an organisational culture that is safe for children.
- Developing staff's awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities young people face to enable them to recognise and respond to concerns.
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage in the least intrusive way.
- Reducing potential risks young people face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation, or victimisation.
- Capturing the child's voice where possible.

This policy will contribute to the protection of children by:

- Including appropriate work within sessions.
- Implementing safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.
- Working in partnership with a wide range of multi-disciplinary agencies.

3. Key Principles

- Build a culture of openness and transparency where all staff can demonstrate understanding of their role and responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.
- Focus on securing improved outcomes for young people, providing support and intervention at the earliest possible opportunity in the least intrusive way.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We have conversations, build relationships and maintain professional curiosity.
- When issues arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will speak out, addressing them internally where possible and engaging in a multi-agency response when required, in accordance with inter-agency procedures.
- The Seeds of Change shares information with other professionals in the interests of safeguarding children in accordance with the guidance within *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015* and *Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, 2015*.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has lead responsibility for safeguarding, which is not delegated. This is clearly defined within the role holder's job description and that this person has the appropriate authority, time,

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training, funding and resources to undertake this role as per *Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023*.

- All staff who work with young people undertake safeguarding training in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023* and receive annual safeguarding updates to ensure their continued professional development. These updates take account of NSCP priorities, the local context, the needs of the pupils and other identified training needs.

4. Key Processes

The DSL and Deputy DSL should be aware of the guidance issued by Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) within the Threshold Framework to secure support and intervention for children and young people. Any referrals are made at the earliest possible opportunity in the least intrusive way. TSOC will seek advice from local safeguarding hubs within Northamptonshire as appropriate.

5. Expectations

All staff will:

- Be familiar with this safeguarding policy and implement it consistently in the course of their work with young people.
- Raise any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mary Hopper, or her Deputy, Jo York, who will refer the concern to the relevant referring body or Children's Social Care.
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks.
- Be involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, early help assessments and plans, Child in Need plans and inter-agency Child Protection plans where appropriate as requested by referring bodies or Children's Social Care.
- Be alert to signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and possible abuse.
- Recognise and respond to concerns about the behaviour of staff and students which indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, following inter-agency procedures agreed by the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership).
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a young person in line with The Seeds of Change Safeguarding Cause for Concern procedures in [Appendix 3](#).
- All staff will receive *Working Together* training at the point of induction. This will be regularly updated at a minimum of two-yearly intervals. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and named deputy will undertake additional higher-level training to ensure they have appropriate knowledge and skills to undertake the role, utilising training opportunities available from the LSCB and other organisations as agreed by the senior leadership team. This training will be regularly updated at a minimum of two-yearly intervals.
- In addition to the above, all staff will receive annual safeguarding updates which may include e-learning, circulation of information and guidance internally, staff meetings and inset

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training. The subject / topics for training and updates will take into consideration LSCB priorities, local context, needs of our young people and identified training needs of staff.

- The Seeds of Change has a bullying policy which includes child on child abuse and a procedure in place to minimise child on child abuse.
- We also have an Attendance and Non-attendance policy and protocol.
- For further information around specific themes, cases or general safeguarding information, coaches have access to the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership [website](#).

6. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mary Hopper, is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and takes lead responsibility for co-ordinating all safeguarding and child protection activity in our organisation. She provides support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services and referring bodies. [\(Appendix One\)](#)
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is supported by our **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** (DDSL), Jo York.
- When the Seeds of Change has concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy will decide what steps should be taken in accordance with this policy, in discussion with the referring body and LSCB (where appropriate) and initiate a response as necessary. The DSL/DDSL will refer cases to the Police where a crime may have been committed.
- The DSL/DDSL will liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*, [the NPCC – when to call police](#) should help the DSL understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect if they do so.
- The DSL will refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed. The DSL will report appropriate incidents irrespective of whether or not the individual concerned wants to pursue it as there have been increased cases of them not doing it.
- DSL will liaise with the Senior Leadership Team for allegations against staff to ensure where necessary referrals have been made to the Disclosure and Barring Service when a person is dismissed or resigned due to risk/harm to a child.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure safeguarding and child protection information is dealt with in a confidential manner and in accordance with the LSCB information sharing guidance. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with a young person.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure access to safeguarding and child protection records is limited for staff other than the DSL/DDSL.
- When a DSL resigns their post or no longer has child protection responsibility, there will be a full face to face handover of information with the new post holder.

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- We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their responses to this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and seek further support as appropriate, for example through supervision sessions that coaches are required to undertake every half term.
- The DSL understands that compliance is measure via the bi-annual audit return, as per the statutory duty to safeguard young people across the local authority.
- The DSL will ensure that for best practise, supervision takes place regularly to identify next steps and escalation, in order to provide the best outcomes for young people.

7. A Safer Provision

Our culture is one which is safe for young people and unsafe for adults that may pose a risk to children. We uphold the belief that safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults working in the organisation and that all concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Directors when concerns relate to a member of staff. Essential to this is a professional curiosity, openness and transparency where the focus remains on the young people attending our provision.

We hold an Online Safety Policy, addressing issues of accessing potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, with appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. Learners only access the internet on a Seeds of Change laptop under direct supervision of a staff member.

8. Safer Recruitment and Selection

The Seeds of Change pays full regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, DfE 2023. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and undertaking appropriate enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

- All recruitment materials will include reference to the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children.
- A minimum of 2 members of staff (including the DSL and DDSL) have undertaken Safer Recruitment training and at least one will be involved in **all** staff / recruitment processes and sit on the recruitment panel.

9. Our Role in the Prevention of Abuse

In accordance with *Working Together 2018*, The Seeds of Change recognises the need to safeguard young people from:

- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse

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- Sexual Abuse ([Appendix 2](#) contains more information about definitions and indicators).

In addition, The Seeds of Change are alert to the need to safeguard children in specific circumstances as defined within *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023*. Our safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the organisation, which should ensure that young people are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

10. The Seeds of Change Programmes

We will provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being together with preparing young people for life in modern Britain and embedding Fundamental British Values.

Regulations have been put in place whereby Relationships Education (for primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (for secondary pupils) in state funded schools will be mandatory from 2020. Self-awareness, self-care and understanding of healthy relationships are embedded within our curriculum and personal development programmes.

11.1 Safeguarding in specific circumstances: Children who are vulnerable to extremism

- The Seeds of Change seeks to protect young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.
- In accordance with the Prevent Duty placed upon provisions by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we understand the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. The Seeds of Change is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.
- The Seeds of Change values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. However, free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion. Essential to this are fundamental British values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Equality of Opportunity, Freedom of Speech and the rights of all women and men to live free from persecution of any kind and it would be expected that views and opinions expressed would be commensurate with these.
- Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in [Appendix Six](#).
- The Seeds of Change team understands the referral processes in place within Northamptonshire should a Prevent concern arise.
- The Seeds of Change promotes the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

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11.2 Risk reduction

When any member of staff has concerns that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL or DDSL who should then contact the SPOC (Single Point of Contact for Prevent and/or DSL of the young person's referring body)

In accordance with the Prevent duty, Mary Hopper is the single point of contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within The Seeds of Change for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.

If a young person is thought to be at risk of radicalisation, a referral to Channel Panel should be made using the Early Help Assessment form by the referring body. This should be reported as a cause for concern and follow up actions documented.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, e.g. they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Staff have received WRAP (Working to Raise Awareness of Prevent) and/or Channel Awareness training to raise awareness of Prevent and to understand their role in ensuring vulnerabilities are recognised, and appropriate support or intervention is secured. If a young person is thought to be at risk of radicalisation, advice will be sought from the Chanel Team or the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. A referral will be made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and if advised, information will be shared with the Chanel Panel.

12. Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances: Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It can be known as female circumcision or female genital cutting and is carried out for cultural, religious and social reasons within families and communities.

FGM is illegal in the UK and it's also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or help someone trying to do this.

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon 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. This is in addition to following The Seeds of Change safeguarding procedures.

Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

Further information regarding FGM can be found in [Appendix Seven](#).

13. Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances: Peer on Peer Abuse (Child on Child)

- All staff should be aware that safeguarding incident and or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the session and can occur in other environments. The DSL and DDSL should consider whether young people are at risk of exploitation outside of their families. Extra familial harms including but not limited to CSE and youth violence.
- The Seeds of Change recognises that children can abuse other children and such behaviours are never viewed simply as 'banter', leading to or as part of growing up 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Such attitudes can lead to a culture of

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unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for young people. Subsequently this can normalise abuse, leading the young person to accept that this is normal and minimises the chances of them reporting abuse. We recognise that peer on peer abuse can take many different forms such as:

- Cyber-bullying
 - Bullying including cyber bullying, prejudice- based and discriminatory bullying
 - Physical abuse, hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourage abuse).
 - Sending or posting sexually suggestive images including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobiles or over the internet by persons aged under 18 (referred to as Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting)
 - Sexual assault causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity.
 - Sexual violence or harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse (this may include an online element).
 - Up-skirting: an illegal offence which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing.
 - Sexually harmful or problematic behaviour.
 - Gang initiation or hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person in a group and may also include an online element).
 - Banter: see Child on Child Abuse policy
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- All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside environments and/or can occur between children outside of these environments and online. It is important that all recognise the indicators and signs of peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond appropriately.
 - All staff, but especially the DSL and DDSL, should consider whether children are at risk of exploitation or abuse outside of their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
 - The Seeds of Change understands that even though there are no reports within the setting, it doesn't mean abuse is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported. This increases the importance of raising any concerns on peer abuse the team may have and for this to be reported to the safeguarding team.
 - The Seeds of Change will understand the referral pathways in response to sexual harassment and sexual violence as identified in KCSIE (2023)
 - We will reassure the young person that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

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- The Seeds of Change will follow Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance (DfE, 2021) when responding to such issues alongside local interagency procedures and the Harmful Sexual Behaviours strategy. This includes responding to any reports in a child centred manner and undertaking an immediate risk and needs assessment in relation to the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other children.
- Up-skirting is an illegal offence which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- The Seeds of Change understands serious violence and what may signal that children are at risk from or are involved in serious violent crime. Indicators may include increased absences, a change in friendships/relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, self-harm, significant change in wellbeing or signs of assaulted/unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could indicate that children have been appropriated, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs
- Contextual safeguarding/extra familial risk as referenced in KCSIE (2023) highlights that *'assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process.* The seeds of change understand contextual safeguarding and will make a referral where necessary and in conjunction with the referring body.
- The Seeds of Change will report and respond to allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment. TSOC has adopted a **child-on-child abuse policy** which outlines the actions TSOC will take in responsibility to reports of child on child abuse.
- The Seeds of Change carry out annual reviews of our approach to online safety which is supported by risk assessments.

14. Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances: Sexualised behaviours

Where young people display sexualised behaviours, the behaviours will be considered in accordance with the children's developmental understanding, age and impact on the alleged victim.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse The Seeds of Change will consider the vulnerability of all children including those alleged to have caused the harm and those alleged to be victims and provide a safeguarding response appropriate to this.

Where issues indicate that a criminal offence may have been committed a report will be made to the local police force in conjunction with the young person's referring body.

The Seeds of Change will utilise support and guidance from wider services such and make referrals where necessary. The Seeds of Change will manage incidents of sexualised behaviour on a case-by-case basis, with consideration to the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

The Seeds of Change will support victims through reporting concerns to the police and will ensure the wellbeing of the child is support thereafter.

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15. Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances: Gang related violence

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the centre and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) should consider whether young people are at risk of exploitation or abuse outside of their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including, but not limited to, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth crime.

The Seeds of Change is aware of indicators that may signal young people are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

- Increased absences from school
- A change in friendships or groups (friendships with older children or groups)
- A decline in performance
- Changes to wellbeing or signs of self-harm
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts and possessions (this may indicate they have been approached with individuals associated with gangs)

The Seeds of Change identify risk factors associated with young people that have been permanently excluded from school. Further advice regarding youth violence is provided in the [Home Office's Preventing youth violence](#) and gang involvement and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#)

The Seeds of Change recognises the risks posed to young people in relation to involvement in gang related activity which may be street gang, peer group or organised crime. Young people who are involved in gangs are more likely to suffer harm themselves, through retaliatory violence, displaced retaliation, and territorial violence with other gangs or other harm suffered whilst committing a crime. In addition, children may experience violence as part of an initiation or hazing practices.

The Seeds of Change understands that referral can be crucial in the early identification of young people who may need additional support due to gang related activity and as such will provide an appropriate response. A referral will be made in accordance with the local authority's procedures within Northamptonshire (YOS & CIRV).

Where there are concerns that a young person may be or is at risk of becoming involved in gang related activity, a cause for concern form will be raised in line with safeguarding procedures. See Appendix five for more information. Consideration will be applied in young people's relationships.

16. Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances: Youth generated sexualised imagery

The Seeds of Change recognises the impact of online social communication and the issue of sending or posting sexually suggestive images including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobiles or over the internet.

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All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

In all cases where an incident of youth produced sexual imagery is reported or suspected the incident should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and a cause for concern form raised to the young person's referring body. At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately in conjunction with the referring body.

An immediate referral will be made to the Police and Social care in conjunction with the referring body in the following circumstances:

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been co-erced, blackmailed or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent (eg. owing to special educational needs)
- The imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13.
- There is reason to believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.
- Staff within The Seeds of Change will not view youth produced sexual imagery unless there is a good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible the Designated Safeguarding Lead will respond to an incident based on what they have been told about the imagery. More information is available in Appendix Nine.

17. Safeguarding Children in specific circumstances: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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Young people can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

The Seeds of Change recognises that both boys and girls can be vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation and as such ensure staff are alert to signs and indicators.

The Seeds of Change recognises that there are various 'models' of CSE which include but not limited to:

- Gangs and groups
- Boyfriend/Girlfriend model
- Peer on Peer
- Familial
- Online
- Abuse of authority

A multi-agency response via MASH may be initiated through a response to a referral.

18.1 Children in Specific Circumstances

Further guidance in relation to safeguarding young people in specific circumstances can be located in various literature including Local Safeguarding Children Boards procedures as listed below:

- Abuse Linked to Spiritual Belief
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Safeguarding Children vulnerable to Gang Activity
- Supporting individuals vulnerable to violent extremism
- Private Fostering
- Children missing from home or care

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- Children missing from education
- Children of Parents who Misuse Substances
- Children of Parents with Learning Difficulties
- Working with parents/carers with mental health problems
- Working with parents/carers with disabilities
- Disabled Children
- Protocol for dealing with domestic violence when children are involved
- Online – Children Exposed to Abuse through the Digital Media
- Fabricated or Induced Illness
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage / Honour Based Violence
- Practice Guidance & Procedures to distinguish between healthy and abusive sexual behaviours in children and young people
- Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked
- Protocol & Guidance; Working with Sexually Active Young People
- Working with hostile, non-compliant clients and those who use disguised compliance
- Safeguarding young people on the Autistic spectrum

The Seeds of Change strives to remain up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation. Our staff are supported through training to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues. Our Designated/ Deputy Safeguarding Lead knows where to seek advice as necessary.

18.2 Mental Health

- All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood - it is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern, about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.
- The Seeds of Change team will access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support and this includes working with external agencies - [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)

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19. Homelessness

The Seeds of Change recognises that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL and DDSL are aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

- The Seeds of Change recognises that whilst in most cases TSOC will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances where appropriate.
- TSOC are aware of the indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness, to include: household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. TSOC will ensure that their diverse curriculum offers opportunities to provide learners and their families, at discretion, with support as required, for example food bank items, toiletries.
- Referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate but will not replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. This will be referred through the commissioning body that is working alongside the young person.

The Local Authority has a legal duty to address concerns under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The focus is early intervention and to encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

20. Children with Additional Needs

The Seeds of Change recognises that while all young people have a right to be safe, some may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example those with a disability or special educational need, those living with domestic abuse or drug / alcohol abusing parents, etc.

We recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special educational needs or disabilities, medical or physical health conditions. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

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- cognitive understanding: being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in centre/ schools or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the DSL / DDSL and be followed through in the same way as raising Cause for Concerns.

21. What we Do When we are Concerned about a Young Person and Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

All Staff will adhere to the Safeguarding Procedure (**Appendix 3**) and be familiar with the procedure to follow in the event of a disclosure or concerns for a young person's physical/emotional safety.

Any concerns should be reported to the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible on the same day. Once DSL/DDSL is notified of the concern, it is telephoned through to the referring body and followed up in writing on a Cause for Concern form the same day.

The DSL/DDSL will contact the relevant referring body to report the concern and will complete the relevant section of the Cause for Concern form detailing the actions agreed with them or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

The Seeds of Change will co-operate with any Child Protection enquiries conducted by children's social care and, where required, The Seeds of Change will provide representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as Team around the Family meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, together with core group meetings. If attendance at such a meeting is not possible a report will be submitted to the chair.

Where there are concerns about a young person who may be at risk of or experiencing Child Sexual Exploitation, in addition to the processes referred to above The Seeds of Change will, where required, make a referral to the Child Sexual Exploitation Panel in accordance with Local procedures.

In the event that a young person makes a disclosure consider the following:

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the young person, let them know you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the young person. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let them know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Young people very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Encourage the young person to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the young person is trying to tell you.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.

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- Be aware that the young person may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

Young people making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support will be available from our Designated/ Deputy Safeguarding Lead, and additional support can be arranged if required.

22. Multi-Agency Work

We understand our role in supporting three safeguarding partner arrangements (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Groups) as stipulated in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*, and as carried out by Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). Governing bodies, proprietors and their senior leadership teams, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads, should make themselves aware of and follow our local arrangements.

We work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the young people accessing our organisation. Cause for concerns should be raised to the Designated/ Deputy Safeguarding Lead who will liaise with the appropriate referring body and other professionals/ police as appropriate.

We will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children's social care: The Seeds of Change will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as team around the family meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, together with core group meetings. We will provide reports as required for these meetings, and if a representative from The Seeds of Change is unable to attend, a written report will be sent.

23. Involving parents/carers

We will discuss any safeguarding and child protection concerns with those that commission us to support a young person. If a young person is referred to us privately then parents / carers are informed that our procedure is to seek further advice before taking appropriate action. The safeguarding policy can be accessed through the TSOC website, available upon request. All staff can access it through One Drive and are sent a link to this and a digital copy at least annually.

24. Responding to an Allegation or Concern about a Member of Staff

The Seeds of Change will comply with the NSCP procedures for managing allegations and concerns about adults that work or volunteer with children in all circumstances. This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff, visiting professional or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a young person or may have harmed a young person
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to young people
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children

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All staff working within our organisation must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards young people immediately. Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Director and DSL (or DDSL) unless the concern relates to the Director. If the concern relates to the Director, it must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Head of Centre. The DSL will escalate the concern in discussion with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the earliest possible opportunity and within 1 working day.

TSOC will engage with the LADO at all stages of the management of the allegation / concern and comply with the Statutory Guidance contained within *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)* and the local procedures published by the NSCP. In this regard, The Seeds of Change will consider whether it is necessary to suspend the member of staff while the allegation or concern is investigated, however all reasonable alternatives to manage the risk will be considered. Due consideration will be given to the view of the LADO in relation to suspension or in-work safeguards while a matter is investigated.

Should The Seeds of Change dismiss a member of staff/volunteer as a result of a substantiated allegation, or should a member of staff resign before an investigation has been completed, in accordance with Statutory Duty a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made.

TSOC will adhere to the Statutory Guidance contained within *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)* with regard to record keeping, references and compromise or settlement agreements.

24.1 Raising a concern relating to a taxi transporting students:

If a learner reports an allegation or concern about a taxi driver, it is the coach's responsibility to raise the Cause for Concern with the DSL or DDSL in the same way as any other CFC. The DSL or DDSL will report the allegation according to the severity and either take action of informing the police or the taxi company. If a concern is made to the police, the details of the driver and the license number are given. In this instance The Seeds of Change will contact the taxi company informing them that the driver has been raised as a concern. The incident number given by the police will be recorded as the follow up on the CFC form. Any action following this will be decided by the DSL. If the concern is raised with the taxi company directly then the DSL or DDSL will follow this up with the taxi company within 24 hours and inform the referring body of the concern raised.

25. Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQQ)

The Seeds of Change recognise that whilst the fact that a child or a young person may be LGBTQ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, children who are LGBTQ can be targeted by other children. A young person who is perceived by other children to be LGBTQ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ. The Seeds of Change will endeavour to reduce barriers faced by children who are LGBTQ and will provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. This safe space is to be agreed with the young person.

26. What we do when we are concerned about a child

All concerns will be viewed alongside the local authority's framework in order to ensure the appropriate support or intervention is provided at the earliest opportunity in the least intrusive

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way. We make reference to the guidance contained in '*What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*', 2015. We will review each case to ensure that any support or intervention provided has impacted positively on the welfare/safety of the child or young person and that improvement is sustained.

In the event that this does not lead to improvements for the child / young person, or concerns escalate, TSOC will follow the step-up escalation procedures published by the local Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (NSCP).

Completed by: Mary Hopper

Signed: Mary Hopper

Date: 2nd October 2023

To be reviewed: 1st September 2024

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Appendix One: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- support staff who make referrals to the Local Authority Children’s Social Care and act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- refer cases to the Police where a crime may have been committed.
- inform the Directors of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- be aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance – [PACE Code C 2019](#)
- seek advice in regard to safeguarding matters related to radicalisation and make referrals to Channel as required.
- liaise with the Directors for allegations to ensure where necessary referrals have been made to the Disclosure and Barring Service when a person is dismissed or resigned due to risk/harm to a child.
- liaise with the senior mental health professionals, where available, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- ensure safeguarding and child protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner and in accordance with the information sharing guidance.
- ensure staff will be informed of relevant details only when the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child.
- ensure safeguarding and child protection records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic records.
- ensure individual files will be kept for each child.
- ensure access to safeguarding and child protection records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be restricted, and a written record kept of who has had access to them and when.

Appendix Two: Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

1. 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 maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The following may be indicators of neglect:

- Constant hunger.
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food.
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness.
- Frequently dirty or unkempt.
- Often poorly or inappropriately dressed for the weather.
- Poor attendance or often late.
- Poor concentration.
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour.
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated.
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight.
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially.
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings.
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.

2. 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.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse:

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- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape.
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt.
- Bite marks.
- Round burn marks.
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks.
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given.
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred.
- Bald patches.
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning.
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather.
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted.
- Fear of medical help.
- Fear of changing for PE.
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance.
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

3. 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 and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit act of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge.
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness.
- Refusal to communicate.
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains.
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia.
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse.

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- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation.
- Unusual compliance.
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling.
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately.
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group.
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

4. Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives “something” (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child/young person performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person.

The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children’s social care. The significant indicators are:

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity)
- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults.
- Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items.
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities.
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology; and
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast-food outlets.

In addition to making referrals to children’s social care, referrals of children thought to be at risk of, or experiencing CSE will be referred to the Child Sexual Exploitation panel in conjunction with the referring body.

5. 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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. 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. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

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- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly.
- Overreaction to mistakes.
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development.
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders.
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies.
- Behaviours such as rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches.
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing.
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia.
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

N.B.: Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment.

6. Responses from Parents/Carers

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed.
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development.
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries.
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries.
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child.
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child.
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse.
- Parents request removal of the child from home; or
- Violence between adults in the household.

7. Disabled Children

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional vulnerabilities to abuse and neglect such as:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration.

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- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a nonmobile child.
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment.
- Poor toileting arrangements.
- Lack of stimulation.
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint.
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries.
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication.
- Ill-fitting equipment. for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting.
- Misappropriation of a child's finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

Appendix Three: Cause for Concern Procedure

Purpose:

All TSOC staff have a legal duty of care to report any concerns they have relating to the emotional and/or physical welfare of ANY young person accessing The Seeds of Change, however small they feel this might be. A **Cause For Concern (CFC)** form may be used as part of a more formal assessment through Children's Social Care or the Police, and must be completed accurately and followed up as per The Seeds of Change Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Procedure.

When to complete a cause for concern form:

- If a **young person discloses any information** which leads the coach to believe that they, or others may be **in danger either emotionally and/or physically**, including but not limited to:
 - Emotional Abuse
 - Physical Abuse
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Neglect
 - Child Sexual Exploitation
 - Bullying, including cyber bullying
 - Witnessing or being in any way involved in Domestic Violence
 - Use of/dealing or exposure to drugs
 - Fabricated/induced illness
 - Faith Abuse
 - Forced Marriage
 - Gangs and Youth Violence
 - Radicalisation
 - Trafficking
 - Mental Health Concerns including any sign of or, disclosure of self-harm

- If there are **significant changes in the young person's presentation** physically and/or behaviourally, i.e., they are unclean, have lost/gained significant amounts of weight, appear unusually anxious or withdrawn, displaying challenging behaviour above and beyond the norm for that young person.

- If any disclosure or insinuation is made of **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** this must also be reported to the Police under the 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation'. The duty is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred to another professional within the organisation (In such cases the centre coordinator and DSL should be made aware immediately).

- Cause for concern forms should not be used to record details of incidents which may occur on a day-to-day basis at the centre, i.e., disruptive behaviour, difficulties in student relationships etc. unless they fall into one of the above categories, or are of ongoing concern and have not been suitably addressed by raising through the session notes or in discussion with referring body.

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Completing a Cause for Concern Document

Student Name and D.O.B.: Use student's full name, not nicknames, or abbreviations. Date of Birth can be found on referral form.

Session Date: CFC forms MUST be completed on **the same day** the disclosure or concern is raised.

Location of Programme: The Acorn Centre, Newland Road, Walgrave, Northamptonshire NN6 9PZ

Coach/Person Completing form: The form must be completed by the person who noted the concerns or young person's disclosure.

Details of Cause for Concern: Record fact and details of the information shared to you. Do not record any personal views or feelings. If possible, quote the young person's words exactly (e.g. do not use ** for expletives etc.) If commenting on a bruise or physical injury, ensure an accurate description is provided i.e. 'bruise approximately the size of a 50pence piece observed on left forearm'. Do not name other young people on the Cause for Concern form. If it is necessary to refer to other learners, use initials or refer to them as 'their peer' or 'student A/B/C' etc.

Actions: Record who the CFC has been shared with i.e. sent to the Key Worker. Record that the Cause for Concern has been discussed over the phone and with whom. NB if a child is deemed to be at immediate risk or, it would compromise the young person's safety to leave the centre, a phone call MUST be made to the appropriate referring body as soon as possible and, where necessary, the NSCP MASH team. The form is then emailed through and recorded on our CFC Tracker.

Follow up: to be completed by DSL (Mary Hopper) or DDSL (Jo York)

Detail actions taken by the referring body or person to whom the CFC was reported and the outcome of this, i.e., referring body passed details of Cause for Concern to Children's Social Care. Include the date that that follow up has taken place. If the Cause for concern has not been followed up to a satisfactory resolution request that additional action is taken and diarise further follow up.

Sign Off: Name of person completing cause for concern to sign and date. Name of person following up agreed actions to sign and date. Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead sign off to agree CFC can be closed, when the agreed follow up actions have been completed and The Seeds of Change Safeguarding Leads are satisfied that the Cause for Concern issue has been sufficiently addressed.

Storage: Safeguarding leads should save the concern raised for the young person in the student's folder on One Drive, ensuring it is also recorded with a link to the document on the CFC Tracker.

Cause for Concern Protocol

You **notice something** of concern about learner or something they have said.

If necessary, paraphrase, question or repeat to **clarify, but don't lead** or make assumptions.

As soon as possible, make a **note** of key points and use learner's **exact words** where possible.

As soon as possible, radio **'Mary CFC'** (or Jo if Mary not available) and listen for confirmation.

Mary (or Jo) **will discuss CFC in person**, inform referring body by phone and, if urgent, arrange cover for CFC to be written up straight

Write up the Cause for Concern using agreed template: [Cause for Concern Template July23.docx](#)

Upload Cause for Concern document to learner's folder. **Email Mary** (or Jo) to say CFC

Mary (or Jo) will email **CFC to referring body** DSL and record on **CFC Tracker**. **Mary** (or Jo) will **follow up and sign off** actions as required.

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Appendix Three: Cause for Concern Form

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Seeds of Change Cause for Concern Form

Student Name & Date of Birth:		Location of Programme:	The Acorn Centre, Walgrave, Northamptonshire NN6 9PZ
Session Date:		Coach / Person completing form:	
Details of Concern:			
Actions taken and by whom:			
Follow up: <i>confirm that agreed action has taken place and the result of this</i>			
Sign Off:			
Name of person completing form: _____		Date: _____	
Person following up actions (DSL): _____		Date: _____	
Sign off to agree CFC can be closed: _____		Date: _____	

Appendix Four: Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

When a child tells me about abuse s/he/they has suffered, what must I remember?

- stay calm - do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- reassure the young person and say you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- never make promises to keep secrets for or with the child.
- assure her/him/them that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this (state who this will be and why)
- tell her/him/them that you believe them and praise the child for telling you
- children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he/they may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed
- tell the child that it is not their fault
- encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information
- listen and remember, paying attention to the words they use
- check you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you
- communicate that s/he/they has a right to be safe and protected
- do not tell the child that what s/he/they experienced is dirty, naughty or bad
- it is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender
- be aware that the child may retract what s/he/they have told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- at the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- as soon as you can, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's language and questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

It is staff's role not to seek disclosures but to observe something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and make time to talk. The child may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. **You must not deal with this yourself.** Clear indications or a disclosure of abuse must be reported to referring bodies without delay, by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Children making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Appendix Five: Allegations and concerns about a member of staff

Inappropriate behaviour by staff could take the following forms:

- **Physical**
For example: the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or inappropriate physical handling.
- **Emotional**
For example: intimidation; belittling; scapegoating; sarcasm; lack of respect for children's rights; excessive and/or aggressive shouting; and attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality.
- **Sexual**
For example: sexualised behaviour towards peers; sexual harassment; sexual communication including via social networking, email, text; grooming behavior; and sexual assault and rape.
- **Neglect**
For example: failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to meet a child's basic needs.
- **Behaviours which may pose a risk**

Some behaviours which may take place outside of the workplace could present a transferable risk in an employee's professional role working with or in the vicinity of children. For example, alleged perpetrator of domestic abuse, offences demonstrating a sexual interest in children, abuse or neglect of their own children or behaviours that are incompatible with a professional role working with children. If a child makes an allegation or raises a concern about a member of staff, the Director should be informed immediately. If the allegation or concern falls within the following criteria, the LADO or local authorities will be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity within 1 working day:

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

The Director will not carry out the investigation him/herself. If a child makes an allegation of physical abuse against an adult that works with children and there are visible bruises, marks or injuries, or if a child makes an allegation of sexual abuse against an adult that works with children, child protection procedures will be followed and a referral made to Children's Social Care. The LADO will also be informed.

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- Where an allegation has been made against the Directors then the LADO team or local authority will be contacted to determine the appropriate way forward. For details of this specific procedure see the section **on Allegations against Staff and Volunteers.**

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

We recognise that concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources, for example:

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

The Seeds of Change understand that the term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out (as per KCSIE 2023, paragraph 422).

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult may have about a child is recorded in session notes and highlighted in red. **See Low Level Concern Policy.**

TSOC have appropriate policies and processes in place to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children. TSOC will seek advice as required.

We understand that creating a culture in which **all** concerns about adults & young people (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical.

As good practice we will:

- set out a **low-level concern** policy
 - ensure procedures are implemented effectively
 - ensure staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
 - empower staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy)
 - address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage
 - provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised,
 - help identify any weakness in the safeguarding system.
- If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the TSOC low-level concerns policy and Whistleblowing Policy
 - Low-level concerns about a member of staff will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Director.

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- Where a low-level concern is raised about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it will be shared with the Director.
- All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record will include:
 - details of the concern
 - the context in which the concern arose
 - action taken
 - the name of the individual sharing their concerns will also be noted, however if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible.
- The Director will be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns and may consult with the DSL to take a more collaborative decision-making approach.
- Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, TSOC will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, be referred to the local authority.
- Low-level concerns would not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral and found to be substantiated, it would be referred to in a reference.

Appendix Six: Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:
Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:
The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:
 - Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs
 - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
 - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
 - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.
4. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.
5. Children may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
 - Identity Crisis – the child is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
 - Personal Crisis – the child may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
 - Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the child’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
 - Unmet Aspirations – the child may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
 - Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration.

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- Special Educational Need – children may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.
7. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism. More critical risk factors could include:
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
 - Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
 - Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature.
 - Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
 - Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
 - Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
 - Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour.
 - Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

MUU ideology (Mixed, Unclear, Unstable) is a category within the Prevent system, introduced in 2017/18 and designed to distinguish from those cases in which an individual's ideology is obvious, well-embedded and appears to be the primary factor drawing them towards TACT offences. It describes what appears to be an increasingly common phenomenon where individuals do not have a well-defined or well-understood ideological motivation. These individuals often seem drawn towards acts of extremism, extremist or terrorist groups or causes, or terrorist violence, as a means of providing them with a 'solution' to other problems in their lives. They commonly present with multiple and complex vulnerabilities.

Mixed: individuals who show interest in several (sometimes disparate) ideologies simultaneously. For example, a joint interest in right-wing extremism and involuntary celibate ("incel") content or Islamist extremism and white supremacy.

Unstable: individuals who initially appear to adhere solely to one ideology but then switch or transition to another.

Unclear: individuals whose ideological influences are less coherent and not easily identifiable. This can include individuals motivated by a hatred of a 'perceived other' without relating to prominent, well-known forms of extremism. This includes but is not limited to those who appear fixated with mass violence (such as shootings) and incels, whose intolerance is predominantly directed at women.

Individuals referred for MUU display a variety of characteristics, including: an interest in multiple extremist ideologies in parallel (e.g. Islamic extremism and white supremacy); switching from one ideology to another over time; targeting a 'perceived other' of some kind without specifically identifying with a particular cause; obsession with massacre or mass violence without a particular target group; and vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism out of a desire for belonging or elevated social state.

Appendix Seven: Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as "female circumcision" or "cutting", and by other terms such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others. FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It is illegal in the UK and is child abuse. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

Effects of FGM

There are no health benefits to FGM, and it can cause serious harm, including:

- constant pain
- pain and/or difficulty having sex
- repeated infections, which can lead to infertility
- bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- problems passing urine or incontinence
- depression, flashbacks and self-harm
- problems during labour and childbirth, which can be life-threatening for mother and baby
- Some girls die from blood loss or infection as a direct result of the procedure

Why FGM is carried out

FGM is carried out for various cultural, religious and social reasons within families and communities in the mistaken belief that it will benefit the girl in some way (for example, as a preparation for marriage or to preserve her virginity). However, there are no acceptable reasons that justify FGM. It's a harmful practice that isn't required by any religion and there are no religious texts that say it should be done. There are no health benefits of FGM. FGM usually happens to girls whose mothers, grandmothers or extended female family members have had FGM themselves or if their father comes from a community where it's carried out.

Where FGM is carried out

Girls are sometimes taken abroad for FGM, but they may not be aware that this is the reason for their travel. Girls are more at risk of FGM being carried out during the summer holidays, as this allows more time for them to "heal" before they return to school. Communities that perform FGM are found in many parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Girls who were born in the UK or are resident here but whose families originate from an FGM practising community are at greater risk of FGM happening to them. Communities at particular risk of FGM in the UK originate from:

Egypt, Yemen, Eritrea, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria, Indonesia, Mali, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, Kenya, Liberia.

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The law and FGM

FGM is illegal in the UK. It is an offence to:

- perform FGM (including taking a child abroad for FGM)
- help a girl perform FGM on herself in or outside the UK
- help anyone perform FGM in the UK
- help anyone perform FGM outside the UK on a UK national or resident
- fail to protect a girl for whom you are responsible from FGM

Anyone who performs FGM can face up to 14 years in prison. Anyone found guilty of failing to protect a girl from FGM can face up to seven years in prison. Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (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.

Possible signs and indicators of FGM

A girl or woman who's had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Below are some warning signs that MAY indicate a girl is at risk of FGM

- Parents requesting additional periods of leave around school holiday times
- If the girl comes from a country with a high prevalence of FGM
- Mother and siblings have undergone FGM
- Child may indicate that they are going for a special event

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Appendix Eight: Safeguarding in Specific Circumstances: Gang Involvement

There are particular risk factors and triggers that young people experience in their lives that can lead to them becoming involved in gangs. Many of these risk factors are similar to involvement in other harmful activities such as youth offending or violent extremism. Risk indicators may include:

- Becoming withdrawn from family
- Sudden loss of interest - decline in attendance or academic achievement
- Starting to use new or unknown slang words
- Holding unexplained money or possessions
- Staying out unusually late without reason
- Sudden change in appearance - dressing in a particular style or 'uniform'
- Dropping out of positive activities
- New nickname
- Unexplained physical injuries
- Graffiti style tags on possessions, schoolbooks, walls
- Constantly talking about another young person who seems to have a lot of influence over them
- Broken off with old friends and hanging around with a new group
- Increased use of social networking sites
- Starting to adopt codes of group behaviour e.g. ways of talking and hand signs
- Being scared when entering certain areas
- Being concerned by the presence of unknown youths in their neighbourhood.
- Expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people some of whom may have been friends in the past.

This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide, amended as appropriate in light of local knowledge of the risk factors in a particular area.

Appendix Nine: Safeguarding in specific circumstance – **Youth Produced Sexual Imagery**

Under 18's Sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobile devices or the internet.

Incidents covered by this policy:

- Person under 18 creates a sexual image of themselves and shares it with another person under 18.
- A person under 18s shares an image of another under 18 with another person under 18 or an adult.
- A person under 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under 18.

Incidents not covered by this guidance:

- Under 18s sharing adult pornography.
- Under 18s sharing sexual texts without sexual imagery.
- Adults sharing sexual imagery of under 18s. (This is child sexual abuse and must always be reported to police.)

The Law

Making, possessing, and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is indecent is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you're under 18.

Indecent is not definitively defined in law, but images are likely to be considered indecent if they depict:

- a naked young person
- a topless girl
- an image which displays genitals, and sex acts including masturbation.
- indecent images may also include overtly sexual images of young people in their underwear.

These laws were not created to criminalise young people but to protect them. Although sharing sexual images of themselves is illegal and risky, it is often the result of curiosity and exploration. We believe young people need education, support, and safeguarding not criminalisation. The National Police Chiefs Council has made clear that incidents of youths producing sexual imagery should be treated primarily as a safeguarding issue. However, the Police may need to be involved in cases to ensure thorough investigation including collection of evidence. If a young person has shared imagery consensually, such as when in a romantic relationship, or as a joke, and there is no intended malice, it is usually appropriate for the referring body to manage the incident directly. In contrast, any incidents with aggravating factors, for example, a young person sharing someone else's imagery without consent and with malicious intent, should generally be referred to police and/or children's social care. If you have any doubts about whether to involve other agencies, you should make a referral to the police.

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Assessing the risks

The circumstances of incidents can vary widely. If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL should conduct a further review (including an interview with the young people involved) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

When assessing the risks, the following should be considered:

- Why was the imagery shared? Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?
- Who has shared the imagery? Where has the imagery been shared? Was it shared and received with the knowledge of the pupil in the imagery?
- Are there any adults involved in the sharing of the imagery?
- What is the impact on the young people involved?
- Do the young people involved have additional vulnerabilities?
- Does the young person understand consent?
- Has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?

Informing parents (or carers)

Parents (or carers) should be informed through the young person's referring body or via specific arrangements agreed at the time a cause for concern is raised. Any decision not to inform the parents would generally be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when the parents should be informed.

DSLs may work with the young people involved to decide on the best approach for informing parents. In some cases, DSLs may work to support the young people to inform their parents themselves.

Viewing the imagery

Adults should not view youth produced sexual imagery unless there is good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible responses to incidents should be based on what DSLs have been told about the content of the imagery. If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL would need to be satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)?
- is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report.
- is unavoidable because a young person has presented an image directly to a staff member.

If it is necessary to view the imagery, then the DSL should:

- Never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal.
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team.
- Ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the member of the senior management team.
- Ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery.

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- Record the viewing of the imagery in the safeguarding records including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions.

Appendix Ten: Safeguarding in Specific circumstances – **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation takes different forms - from a seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, affection, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime and child trafficking. Child sexual exploitation involves differing degrees of abusive activities, including coercion, intimidation or enticement, unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyber bullying), and grooming for sexual activity. There is increasing concern about the role of technology in Sexual Abuse, including via social networking and other internet sites and mobile phones. The key issue in relation to child sexual exploitation is the imbalance of power within the 'relationship'. The perpetrator always has power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops.

Many children and young people are groomed into sexually exploitative relationships, but other forms of entry exist. Some young people are engaged in informal economies that incorporate the exchange of sex for rewards such as drugs, alcohol, money or gifts. Others exchange sex for accommodation or money as a result of homelessness and experiences of poverty. Some young people have been bullied and threatened into sexual activities by peers or gangs which is then used against them as a form of extortion and to keep them compliant.

The key indicators of child sexual exploitation include:

Health

- Physical symptoms (bruising suggestive of either physical or sexual assault);
- Chronic fatigue
- Recurring or multiple sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy and/or seeking an abortion
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or other substance misuse
- Sexually risky behaviour. Education
- Truancy/disengagement with education or considerable change in performance at school.
- Emotional and Behavioural Issues
- Volatile behaviour exhibiting extreme array of mood swings or use of abusive language
- Involvement in petty crime such as shoplifting, stealing
- Secretive behaviour
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Reports of being seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation, including public toilets known for cottaging or adult venues (pubs and clubs).

Identity

- Low self-image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour, e.g. cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity.

Relationships

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- Hostility in relationships with staff, family members as appropriate and significant others
- Physical aggression
- Placement breakdown
- Reports from reliable sources (e.g. family, friends or other professionals) suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation
- Detachment from age-appropriate activities
- Associating with other young people who are known to be sexually exploited
- Known to be sexually active
- Sexual relationship with a significantly older person, or younger person who is suspected of being abusive
- Unexplained relationships with older adults
- Possible inappropriate use of the Internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults, via the Internet
- Phone calls, text messages or letters from unknown adults
- Adults or older youths loitering outside the home
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for in spite of having no known home base
- Missing for long periods, with no known home base
- Going missing and being found in areas where they have no known links.

Please note: Whilst the focus is often on older men as perpetrators, younger men and women may also be involved and staff should be aware of this possibility.

Social Presentation

- Change in appearance
- Going out dressed in clothing unusual for them (inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from older young people).

Family and Environmental Factors

- History of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse; neglect; domestic violence; parental difficulties.

Housing

- Pattern of previous street homelessness
- Having keys to premises other than those known about.

Income

- Possession of large amounts of money with no plausible explanation
- Acquisition of expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions without plausible explanation
- Accounts of social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding.

Appendix Eleven: Information Sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers July 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

This HM Government advice is non-statutory and has been produced to support practitioners in the decisions they take to share information, which reduces risk of harm to children and young people and promotes their well-being.

This guidance does not deal with bulk or pre-agreed sharing of personal information between IT systems or organisations other than to explain their role in effective information governance.

This guidance has been updated to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, and it supersedes the HM Government *Information sharing guidance for practitioners and managers* published in March 2015.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked. Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safelives; domestic abuse and young people](#)
- [Domestic abuse specialist sources for support](#)

Appendix Twelve: Safeguarding in Specific Circumstances –

Gang involvement

There are particular risk factors and triggers that young people experience in their lives that can lead to them becoming involved in gangs. Many of these risk factors are similar to involvement in other harmful activities such as youth offending or violent extremism.

Risk indicators may include:

- becoming withdrawn from family
- sudden loss of interest in school - decline in attendance or academic achievement
- starting to use new or unknown slang words
- holding unexplained money or possessions
- staying out unusually late without reason
- sudden change in appearance - dressing in a particular style or 'uniform'
- dropping out of positive activities
- new nickname
- unexplained physical injuries
- graffiti style tags on possessions, school books, walls
- constantly talking about another young person who seems to have a lot of influence over them
- broken off with old friends and hanging around with a new group
- increased use of social networking sites
- starting to adopt codes of group behaviour e.g. ways of talking and hand signs
- expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people some of whom may have been friends in the past
- being scared when entering certain areas
- being concerned by the presence of unknown youths in their neighbourhood

This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide.