

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Meadowcroft School

LEAD DSL: Donna Howard

SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR: James Joyce

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1.0 Policy statement

Outcomes First Group is committed to ensuring that all of the people we support are effectively safeguarded in all services including fostering, schools and residential homes at all times. This policy applies to all children and young adults receiving education in our settings. It applies when working online and offline, in settings and in all virtual communications.

Safeguarding and child protection must always be the highest priority and at the forefront of everything we do. A whole school approach is required to ensure safeguarding and child protection are embedded in all decisions, planning, policy and day-to-day operations and activities.

It is essential that everybody working within the Outcomes First Group understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors must ensure that staff who work directly with children read and understand Part 1 of [KCSIE 2021](#). Staff who do not work directly with children can read and understand either Part one or Annex A if it is more effective to enable them to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All Outcomes First Group employees working directly or indirectly with children **must** ensure that:

- children and young people feel safe and that they are listened to;
- they create an environment and culture in which children and young people feel valued;
- the best interests of the child are always considered and acted upon;
- safer recruitment procedures are rigorously followed (please refer to the Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy for further details);
- they understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe through ongoing learning, development and supervision;
- they are vigilant in monitoring possible signs of abuse including for those children and young people who have complex learning difficulties or specific communication needs, who may be particularly vulnerable;
- they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**;
- they follow the appropriate procedures in place for sharing safeguarding concerns and that these are shared with relevant professionals in a timely manner;
- they understand and implement local safeguarding procedures as set out in local authority arrangements;
- children and young people have opportunity to learn about appropriate relationships with adults and recognise unacceptable behaviour by adults.
- they are aware that children can abuse other children (i.e. peer-on-peer abuse).
- there is a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, violence, abuse, inappropriate behaviour and bullying of any kind are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

2.0 What is safeguarding and child protection?

2.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and young people to protect them from harm. This policy includes the safeguarding of young adult learners within Outcomes First Group schools and other settings and applies both offline and online.

- 2.2** Safeguarding is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, Sept 2018, updated Dec 2020) as:
- Protecting children from maltreatment;
 - Preventing impairment of children's health and development;
 - Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 2.3** Outcomes First Group adopts a contextual safeguarding approach to safeguarding and child protection. Contextual safeguarding is: *'...an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.'* (Dr Carlene Firmin)
- 2.4 Child Protection**
Child protection is an important aspect of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.
- 2.5 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
While local authorities and placing authorities have statutory responsibilities regarding safeguarding, Outcomes First Group believes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The Group expects that staff keep the child or young person at the centre of all that they do and that any actions taken are in the best interests of the child. We also expect that children and young people are listened to and their voices are always heard. This is without exception and regardless of whether the child or young person is being cared for in a residential setting, foster home or being educated within school or remotely.
- 2.6 Defining Significant Harm/Child Abuse**
'Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Whatever the form of abuse or neglect, practitioners should put the needs of children first when determining what action to take' (Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018, updated Dec 2020)
- 2.7** The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of 'Significant Harm' as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Under Section 47 of the Act, local authorities have a duty to make enquiries to decide whether

they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm.

2.8 Under s31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002:

'harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

'health' means physical or mental health; and

'ill-treatment' includes Sexual Abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Abuse or neglect is not always easy to identify; staff are more than likely to have some information but not the whole picture.

2.9 There are four defined categories of child abuse, which are deemed to be forms of 'Significant Harm':

- Neglect;
- Physical Abuse;
- Emotional Abuse;
- Sexual Abuse.

2.10 It is also important to be aware that:

- technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.
- that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online.

2.11 All staff must be aware of the signs and indicators of child abuse.

3.0 Local Arrangements for the school

3.1 All staff must be aware of the local arrangements for safeguarding relevant to the school in which they work;

3.2 The local arrangements forschool are as follows

3.3 Meadowcroft School safeguarding arrangements are in line with local safeguarding partnership arrangements. The Wakefield safeguarding partnership consists of the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police force in the local authority area)

3.4 The Local Authority Designated Officer is Marie Pettman, 01977 727032, lado.referrals@wakefield.gov.uk

3.5 All safeguarding referrals must be reported to the local authority 0345 8503 503, Social_Care_Direct_Children@wakefield.gov.uk Referrals for children and young people under 18 will be dealt with under the Children's safeguarding arrangements, whereas those 18 and above will be dealt with under the Adult Safeguarding Arrangements.

3.6 The local authority safeguarding referral procedure is **insert referral procedure from safeguarding partnership website including timescales for response, assessment, outcome.**

The Wakefield Safeguarding Partnership prefer that wherever possible / practicable issues concerning children raised by way of a discussion. Our Integrated Front Door is arranged so that Early Help Screening and Social Care staff are available for telephone discussions throughout the working day. If the concerns raised need to be addressed by either the Children's First Hubs or Children's Social Care intervention then any additional information / evidence can then be provided the relevant documentation (MARF/ Early Help Assessment) thereafter.

It is important to remember that if a child is in immediate danger, that an emergency call should be made (999 on the telephone).

To contact the Integrated Front Door call **03458 503 503** and select option 2, then select from either:

- Open Case
- New Referral
- Early Help

Or email: Social_Care_Direct_Children@wakefield.gov.uk

To contact the Emergency Duty Team call **03458503503**, or email as above.

The MASH provides a service between 8.30am and 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on a Friday. Children's Social Care operates an **emergency only** service between 4.30pm and 8.30am Monday to Friday and 24hr Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays via the Out of Hours service, (EDT). Any non-emergency calls or contacts received outside of normal working hours will not be dealt with the next working day.

Children's Social Care Services should decide on a course of action. They should acknowledge receipt of a written referral within 1 working day. If the referrer has not received an acknowledgement within 3 working days they should make contact with the relevant manager in the Children's Social Care Services Team.

For further information on referrals please see:

[1.2.1 Referrals \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

3.7 For all referrals regarding radicalisation all referrals should be sent by email to:

wakefieldpreventreferrals@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

And

Wakefield_prevent@wakefield.gov.uk

If you need to speak to someone about your referral please contact: Wakefield Council on 01924 306645 or 306776 Or CTU 07789 7853634 or 07590 357469 What happens next? Following a referral, the information received is assessed by the Police. Following this assessment a decision will be made on the suitability of the case for discussion at the Wakefield Channel Panel. If the case is not suitable for Channel the Police will notify the referrer about the outcome of the assessment and if necessary make a referral other agencies for support. Following assessment, if the case is deemed suitable for Channel support then the referrer will be invited to the next channel Panel meeting. The referrer should continue to monitor the case and keep Prevent updated with any additional information which could lead to an increase in vulnerabilities to radicalisation. Contacts For further advice about a concern you may have please contact Wakefield Prevent on 01924 306645 or 306776. If no one is available to take your call please email Prevent at: Wakefield_prevent@wakefield.gov.uk and someone will get back to you. If your enquiry is urgent and an emergency please contact the Police on 999.

3.8 For all referrals regarding exploitation the same procedure as detailed in point 3.6 above should be used. In addition, calls can be made to the Wakefield Children and Young People Service's Missing and Children Vulnerable to Exploitation (CVE) Team for advice and consultation on 01924 303570.

3.9 For early help referrals the same procedure as detailed in point 3.6 above should be used. In addition the local children's first hub can be contacted on 01924 303272 and cfhsoutheast@wakefield.gov.uk for consultation and advice.

3.10 The Chair of Governors for Meadowcroft School is: James Joyce

3.11 The Outcomes First Group Head of Safeguarding can be contacted at: anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk

4.0 The role of Senior Managers and Governor

4.1 Governors must have oversight of safeguarding policies and procedures and ensure that they are being effectively implemented within the school and that training is effective. In line with KCSIE (2021), which states that; '*Governing bodies and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take **leadership** responsibility for their schools or college's safeguarding arrangements*'. The named Governor for the school is James Joyce

4.2 Like teaching staff and volunteers, senior managers and Governors must be safely recruited and have all relevant checks on file. Please see the Group's Safer Recruitment Policy for further information.

4.3 It is the Governors' responsibility to ensure that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated Dec 2020).

4.4 Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This has to be balanced with their duty to protect the victim and other children.

6.0 Safeguarding Training and Updates for all staff

6.1 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety, and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, that safeguarding training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning. They must regularly review the training programme to ensure that it includes all the required knowledge and that staff understand how it is to be implemented.

Whilst considering the above training requirements, governing bodies and proprietors should have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

6.2 This policy **must** be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). **All staff are expected to follow this policy and statutory guidance including KCSIE 2021.**

6.3 All staff must read the following documents:

- Part 1 (or Annex A where appropriate) of [KCSIE 2021](#)
- The school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- The school's Anti-bullying policy
- Outcomes First Group's Peer-on-peer abuse policy
- Outcomes First Group's Exploitation policy
- Outcomes First Group's Protecting Children from Radicalisation policy
- Outcomes First Group's Harmful Sexual Behaviours policy
- Outcomes First Group's Safer Recruitment policy
- Outcomes First Group's Data Protection policy
- Outcomes First Group's Web Filtering policy
- Outcomes First Group's Staying Safe Online
- The school's Whistle blowing and complaints policy
- The school's staff behaviour policy (Code of Conduct)
- The school's description and guidance of the role of the DSL
- The school's description and guidance of the role of the Deputy DSL
- [DfE guidance on sexual violence and harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)
- [DfE guidance on Children Missing in Education](#)
- [DfE guidance on Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#)
- [DfE guidance on Teaching Online Safety in Schools](#)
- [DFE Guidance on Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)
- [DFE Guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation](#)

6.4 Safeguarding updates must be regularly provided to staff, either through face-to-face training, meetings or through regular written updates.

- Face to face safeguarding training must be provided (and recorded) to **all staff at least annually.**
- **DSL** must refresh their advanced training **at least every two years.**

6.5 All members of school leadership teams, including the Head Teacher and DSL should also be familiar with **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018** (updated Dec 2020).

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

7.1 Outcomes First Group recognises that it is not just one person's role to safeguard children, it requires a collective approach to safeguarding. All Outcomes First group employees must understand their roles and responsibilities regarding keeping children safe and reporting concerns.

7.2 During staff induction, staff will receive safeguarding training, including online safety. Staff must be familiar and understand the role of the DSL, the local safeguarding partnership and the individual systems relating to safeguarding within the school. Staff must also know, understand and implement the school's behaviour management policy, the child protection policy, the school's code of conduct, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, Part 1.

7.3 Staff are responsible for:

- compliance with Outcomes First Group policies, statutory guidance and legislation including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Updated Dec 2020);
- understanding the role of the DSL;
- helping to develop and deliver a curriculum which helps children and young people to understand about abuse, appropriate and safe relationships with adults and peers, and keeping safe both online and offline;
- helping to provide an environment where children and young people feel safe and valued;
- attending training and meetings;
- ensuring that they fully understand how to report concerns and if not, asking for further training and support;
- understand the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- listening to children and young people;
- supporting children and young people if they disclose safeguarding information;
- ensuring that they are alert to signs of abuse by peers or adults;
- ensuring that they are aware of indicators or possible signs of neglect;
- ensuring that they closely monitor any possible signs of abuse or harm for those children who are unable to communicate verbally or who have complex health and care needs;
- keeping sensitive information confidential and sharing it only with those professionals for whom it is relevant;
- helping to identify those children or young people who may benefit from Early Help;
- helping to implement Child Protection Plans.

7.4 Staff are in a close position to children and young people within schools as they know the children and young people. They have regular contact with them and so are in the best position to know if a child or young person is behaving in a way which could possibly indicate that they are being hurt or harmed. Any concerns, whether these are nagging doubts, worries, concerns or based on information told to them, must be reported immediately to the DSL both verbally and in writing. **It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that this information is acted upon. They have a duty to follow up with the DSL to ensure that action has been taken.**

8.0 Safer Recruitment

8.1 The Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy sets the processes which must be followed for the recruitment of staff and volunteers.

8.2 It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that the Single Central Record is compliant with legislation and statutory guidance and kept up to date and is stored confidentially.

9.0 Early Help

9.1 *'A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989' (KCSIE 2021)*

9.2 It is important that staff take swift and effective action to safeguard children and young people and to stop concerns from escalating. It may be that some children and young people will benefit from Early Help. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

9.3 Staff must be aware and alert to the possibility of Early Help being needed for those children and young people who have particular vulnerabilities, such as those who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

9.4 Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools provide as much information as

possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm

- 9.5** When a child or young person has been referred for Early Help, it is the responsibility of the DSL to set up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration must be given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

10.0 Reporting concerns

10.1 What to do if a child or young person discloses

Systems should be in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

If a child or young person discloses information to a member of staff, they must ensure that they:

- listen to the child or young person and reassure them they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- never give them the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. They must never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- do not dismiss what the child or young person tells them. All concerns must be acted upon rigorously;
- do not promise to keep it a secret. The member of staff must explain that they have a duty to share information to keep them safe and protect them;
- write down what the child or young person tells them. This must be accurate and in the child's words;
- immediately report the concerns to the DSL or deputy. If neither is available, the member of staff must report the information to the Head Teacher, Principal or Regional Director for Education and Care;

- 10.2** Staff must be alert to not just potential familial abuse and allegations, but also to children and young people making allegations against staff, volunteers or peers. In these situations the Group's Managing Allegation Procedures must be followed. (See Section 24 for further details)

- 10.3** All concerns, however small or trivial they may seem, **must** be immediately reported to the DSL. This must be done verbally and then followed up **on the same day** and documented on the electronic recording system. The member of staff has a responsibility to ensure that action has been taken with regards to the concerns on the **following day** and that the concern is documented on the electronic system. If action is not taken in a timely way as the member of staff sees fit, they have a duty to escalate their concerns to the Head Teacher or the Regional Director for Education and Care.

- 10.4** Staff must prioritise the child or young person's immediate safety. They must remain professional and adhere to all safeguarding and confidentiality procedures. After sharing the information with the DSL or deputy, they must not share it with anyone else.
- 10.5** On receipt of the information, the DSL must consider all information and then, in cases of serious concern, report this within **one working day** to the host authority, placing authority, Regional Director for Education and care and where relevant, the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- 11.0 Managing Referrals to DBS and professional bodies**
- 11.1** This may include referrals to Disclosure and Barring Service, Social Work England, or other professional bodies including the Care Council for Wales (CCW), and/or the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) or Teacher Regulation Authority.
- 11.2** A Sub-Committee of the Outcomes First Group Safeguarding & Quality Committee takes an overview of all professional conduct issues to ensure the Group is compliant and consistent with all legal duties relating to referrals to professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 11.3** Outcomes First Group managers must notify the Safeguarding Sub-Committee of all referrals and potential referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service or any relevant professional body in the UK.
- 11.4** All professional conduct issues which may require a referral to a professional body, whether they relate to safeguarding children or not, must be referred to this sub-committee. For example, a teacher may be prohibited from teaching for a wide range of reasons which do not relate to the safety of children or young people.
- 11.5** The Safeguarding Sub-Committee will support the decision-making process to refer an employee to a professional body and/or DBS and make it clear who is responsible for the submission of any relevant documentation. This will normally be delegated to a senior manager within the division.
- 11.6** If an employee is dismissed from employment due to a safeguarding concern or allegation, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or relevant government body in Scotland or Northern Ireland must be made. **It is an offence not to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales.**
- 11.7** If a DBS referral is made, at the point of completion Outcomes First Group managers must notify the Group Head of Safeguarding and the Human Resources Operations Advisor of the referral and any other possible referrals to any relevant professional body in the United Kingdom, relating to the allegation made.
- 11.8** Where a teacher is dismissed or their services are no longer used because of serious misconduct or might have been dismissed or services ceased to be used had they not left first, they must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

12.0 Partnership working and sharing information

12.1 Partnership working and the sharing of information is key in keeping children safe. Everyone who has a role to play in caring for children has a duty to share good quality information with the relevant professionals in a timely manner.

12.2 General Data Protection Regulations

All schools must ensure that they comply with the Outcomes First Group's Data Protection policy which incorporates the GDPR requirements. The GDPR works around the principles of consent and assumes the automatic right of privacy to all individuals. This applies to children and young people's personal information, as well as that of staff and parents/carers.

The GDPR is not a barrier to sharing safeguarding information. Safeguarding concerns must always be passed on. It is not necessary to seek consent to share information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child provided that there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required.

All staff must complete the GDPR training. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the GDPR requirements.

12.3 Schools must ensure that they inform pupils, parents and carers of how their personal information will be stored and used.

12.4 Schools must ensure that they hold emergency contact details of the parents/carers of pupils. This is to be done with the agreement of the parents/carers. In line with KCSIE (2021) schools must hold more than one set of contact details for each pupil, where reasonably possible.

12.5 Data breaches must be reported immediately to the Data Protection manager as set out in the Data Protection Policy.

13.0 Peer on Peer Abuse

13.1 It is essential that all staff understand that abuse is abuse and the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. In addition to the information below, staff should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes First Group's **Peer-on- Peer abuse Policy**.

KCSIE (2021) states: **"Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it."**

13.2 Staff must ensure that they create a school environment where children and young people's safety is paramount and where unacceptable or unsafe behaviour is not tolerated. Staff must be aware and alert to incidents of online abuse between children, consensual

and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images, sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils and bullying. This includes upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Staff must be alert to possible signs of peer-on-peer abuse. Inappropriate language must be rigorously and consistently challenged.

- 13.3** All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** and be vigilant to any signs.

It is important that staff are aware that children may not find it easy to tell an adult about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

13.4 Staff must act immediately and report any concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse to the DSL.

- 13.5** Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:
- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
 - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
 - sexual harassment, e.g. sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent,
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos
 - upskirting
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group)

These forms of abuse can happen inside or outside of school both offline and online.

- 13.6** A contextual safeguarding approach must be taken when considering possible peer-on-peer abuse. Children and young people who display harmful behaviours must be seen as potential victims themselves, and the wider environmental risks must be taken into account. Staff must challenge any gender bias or derogatory language used by staff or pupils. Staff must not dismiss any concerns brought to them by pupils. Staff can report concerns verbally, but they must ensure that all concerns are recorded onto the schools Electronic recording system by the end of the school day.

- 13.7** When making decisions about how to deal with allegations, the age and understanding of the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour must be taken into consideration, as well as any relevant personal circumstances and how this relates to their behaviour. Schools must consider any disparity in age between the young person who has displayed

harmful behaviour and the victim, the impact the behaviour has had on the victim, and any element of coercion or violence.

13.8 DSL must deal with any concerns of peer-on-peer abuse immediately and sensitively. As much information as possible must be gathered from the victim and the young person who has allegedly displayed harmful behaviour in order to gain the facts of what has happened.

13.9 The language used must be sensitive, non-judgemental and must not blame the victim. Victims must be supported and reassured that their safety and welfare within the school is the priority. Risk assessments must be implemented where necessary.

13.10 Where the DSL believes that there has been significant harm caused to the pupil, a referral must be made to the local authority immediately. In agreement with the local authority, parents/carers must be informed. Where possible, as best practice, parents/carers are to be informed face to face.

13.11 If the local authority does not believe it meets their threshold for further action and the DSL is not in agreement, this must be challenged with the local authority.

13.12 After the outcome/conclusion of the incident:

- a contextual safeguarding approach must be taken;
- schools must take all necessary action to learn from the incident and prevent future incidents from occurring, such as through targeted education around specific types of peer-on-peer abuse;
- support for the victim must be offered and provided where possible. Appropriate risk assessments must be implemented to provide reassurance and safety for the victim;
- schools must ensure that they **do not** adopt a victim blaming approach;
- the DSL must complete an investigation into the incident; The investigation must consider the incident itself as well as whether it is an isolated incident, and the personal circumstances of the young person who is alleged to have displayed harmful behaviour;
- if necessary, appropriate referrals must be made to support services for the young person who has displayed harmful behaviours;
- a risk assessment must be completed and implemented for the young person who has displayed harmful behaviours in order to safeguard them and other pupils.

14.0 Bullying

14.1 Severe or persistent forms of bullying can result in Significant Harm, which is why those providing services for children should have adequate policies, procedures and training to counter bullying. Bullying occurs when a person or group of people behave in ways which are designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people. Bullying can be overt and plain for all to see. It can be subtle and insidious. Bullying can become part of the culture, recognised or believed by all or a significant number of people as 'acceptable'.

14.2 Outcomes First Group has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. All staff have a responsibility to challenge all bullying. Staff must help children and young people to understand what bullying is and how to report it. Bullying must be dealt with as a safeguarding matter. Staff must report any bullying concerns to the DSL **on the same day**. The concerns must be documented appropriately.

- 14.3** Schools have a responsibility to ensure that those children and young people who bully, are supported and helped to understand the impact of their actions.

The government has produced the following guidance on Preventing and tackling bullying, mental health and behaviour in school:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

See [Rise Above](#) for links to materials and lesson plans

- 14.4** For further information please refer to the school's anti-bullying policy, child protection policy, the Web Filtering policy, and the DfE guidance [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) (Sept 2021)

- 14.5 All staff have a responsibility to report any suspicions or concerns that a child has or may be mistreated or harmed.**

15.0 Preventative Strategies

- 15.1** The school will take all appropriate action to ensure that children and young people learn about appropriate relationships with adults, keeping safe, online safety as well as sex and healthy relationships. Relationship, Health and Sex Education (RSHE) lessons, Relationships Education, and Relationships and Sex Education will focus on important age-appropriate issues in line with Government guidance. Staff must ensure that children and young people have opportunity to learn about safe relationships between peers as well as who they can talk to if they have any concerns.

A one-stop page providing teachers with support in teaching RSHE topics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>

- 15.2** Children should be supported by staff to understand what abuse is. Children must be listened to and enabled to report any abuse or neglect at the earliest opportunity. They should be given information about how to report abuse or any concerns about possible abuse. This should include being able to access in private, relevant websites or help lines such as Childline to seek advice and help.

- 15.3** The school recognises that some children and young people are more vulnerable by virtue of their complex health or behavioural needs, or disabilities. In these instances, all staff have a responsibility to be the 'eyes and ears' and report all concerns to the DS Lead.

- 15.4** For further information, refer to Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) 'Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment'.

16.0 Online Safety

- 16.1** There is a whole school approach to online safety to help equip pupils with knowledge and understanding to stay safe online. The school helps and supports its pupils to recognise and avoid online safety risks and to help build their digital resilience. This is integrated into everyday learning and covered in detail as part of the RSHE curriculum. There are a range of resources to provide support for online safety in schools at:

<https://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals>

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, but does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent. Examples may include but are not limited to: being over friendly with children; having favourites; engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

- 18.7** It is everyone's responsibility to help children and young people know about grooming and exploitation. Schools must ensure that children and young people know who to talk to if they have any concerns for themselves or other children.

19.0 Serious violence

- 19.1** All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

- 19.2** All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Further guidance for professionals can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

20.0 Female Genital Mutilation

- 20.1** In line with KCSIE (2021), teachers have a legal duty to share concerns regarding FGM; 'If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police'. In suspected cases of FGM, staff must refer to the local authority as well as the police. The DSL will assist and support staff with this.

- 20.2** Staff must read and be familiar with statutory guidance regarding reporting FGM 'FGM Fact sheet': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet>

- 20.3** The DSL must ensure that immediate concerns regarding potential abuse, harm, honour-based abuse including FGM, forced marriage and breast ironing, CSE and Trafficking or

Radicalisation are shared **immediately** with the relevant Regional Director for Education and Care (and Chair of Governors) and that staff have documented them appropriately.

21.0 Preventing Radicalisation

21.1 Outcomes First Group fully recognises its responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children from radicalisation. Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory responsibility on schools to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the 'Prevent' duty.

21.2 All staff must be aware of the signs and indicators of radicalisation. Staff must be proactive in reporting any concerns, regardless of how small they may be, to the DSL who must assist staff to report all concerns regarding radicalisation to the Police as well as the Regional Director for Education and Care. Staff must document their concerns appropriately.

21.3 All staff must be aware of the local procedures relating to reporting radicalisation concerns.

22.0 Children Requiring Support with their Mental Health

22.1 Outcomes First Group recognises that schools have an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Mental ill-health can be an indicator of a child suffering or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All schools should have systems in place for identifying mental health problems and referring to appropriate agencies for additional support. This will ordinarily be with the consent of the child and their family. All details of concerns and any referrals or other support arranged for the child should be documented on the schools electronic recording system.

22.2 Schools can refer to the Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance (2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2> The guidance provides advice on how to create a whole school culture in promoting positive mental health outcomes for children and young people.

23.0 Physical Interventions

23.1 While every school creates an atmosphere of nurturing, unconditional positive regard and warmth, Outcomes First Group recognises that on occasion it may be necessary to use physical intervention to keep a child or young person safe. Physical intervention must be a last resort and must always be proportionate. Once the child is safe and calm, it is essential that there is a debrief with the child. It should be an open discussion with the member of staff encouraging the child to talk about how they feel and understand what happened.

The intervention and the follow-up action must be recorded on the School's Electronic Recording System.

23.2 All staff must read and know the school's individual Physical Intervention Policy.

23.3 If a child or young person makes an allegation after a physical intervention, it is important that the member of staff writes down as much information as possible. Staff must complete

Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the supply agency or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools or colleges, whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school or college, whilst they carry out their investigation.'

24.5 If the allegation is regarding the Head Teacher/Principal then the Regional Director for Education and Care must be informed immediately. They will then seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent).

24.6 **All allegations made against staff must be reported to the Regional Director for Education and Care and HR and the Group Head of Safeguarding, and to safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk. Outcomes First Group recognises that managing allegations can be challenging and so will support with the process.**

24.7 It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that all allegations are managed in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

25.0 Working with the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent)

25.1 In all referrals, the DSL is the lead professional within the school for ensuring that a timely response is received from the local authority. If a response is received which the DSL believes is inappropriate and does not prioritise the child or young person's safety, this must be escalated to the Head Teacher or Governors of the school to agree further action.

26.0 Whistleblowing

26.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Outcomes First Group recognises that on occasion staff may feel that they are unable to tell someone within their immediate place of work about any safeguarding concerns that they may have. The Group also recognises that children will be unable to voice their concerns if they are in an environment where staff also fail to voice their concerns.

26.2 All staff have a duty first and foremost to the children in their school. Any concerns, regardless of how small they may seem, must be reported. DSLs and Head Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that they create an environment where staff feel safe to openly voice any concerns and feel listened to. It is also important that staff feel supported if concerns are raised about them. If staff see or hear about other colleagues' practice which they are concerned about, which potentially may cause emotional or physical harm to a pupil, or if the standard of care being provided falls short of expectations, they must report this.

26.3 Outcomes First Group has an anonymous telephone support system (Safecall) where staff are able to share any concerns that they may have, safely and without fear of reprisal. All whistleblowing concerns will be taken seriously and treated as such.

26.4 Staff can call Safecall on **08009151571**, report online **www.safecall.co.uk/reports**, or email **outcomesfirstgroup@safecall.co.uk**

27.0 Covid-19 and disruption to schools

27.1 The Covid-19 Pandemic has caused significant disruption to education settings during the last two academic years. The safeguarding of children and young people always remains the highest priority in all circumstances. Whilst it is anticipated that the impact of Covid-19 will decrease, the school continues to have clear procedures in place for reducing the risk and spread of infection, managing cases/suspected cases, self-isolation and remote learning.

27.2 The School will:

- Keep up to date with the latest government legislation and guidance and ensure it is followed.
- Follow the system of controls to minimise the risk of infection.
- Have a contingency plan in place for outbreaks in the school or changes in restrictions
- have a remote learning plan in place for pupils to follow and engage in if and when required.
- Staff and children reporting to be symptomatic will be sent home and asked to arrange to have a PCR test as soon as possible and report the result to the school.
- Communicate any changes in processes to parents/carers.
- Regularly review its arrangements and, where necessary, update its risk assessment.

27.3 Each school will have individual arrangements and characteristics that may require site-specific arrangements. In such cases, the Regional Director of the setting should be informed.

All staff should continue to have full regard to KCSIE(2021) and all Outcomes First Group procedures, including the Safeguarding and Managing Allegations against Employees policies. This applies at all times, when working online or offline, remotely or at a setting.

27.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

In circumstances where remote learning takes place, staff and pupils must all know how to contact the DSL and who the deputies are if the DSL is unavailable. A contingency plan should be in place should the DSL become unavailable for work and the current deputising arrangements become depleted. This may be that an alternative senior leader has a buddying arrangement with a DSL from another setting for support should this be required.

Arrangements for reporting and accessing electronic and paper record keeping systems must be in place. If a member of the team is unable to attend work due to self-isolation, they may be able to continue to function as part of the DSL team remotely with this access. Sensitive or confidential case-related information must not be removed from the school to take to another location for remote working. Consider other mechanisms to access the information securely.

27.5. Practice Guidance

Many of the children and young people we educate have EHC plans and may remain in school. It is important that each individual child's circumstances are considered, and it

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/covid/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely>

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/guidance-teaching-pshe-remotely>

27.6 Digital Learning

Where possible digital learning options for children and young people will be made available if they are having to learn remotely. All staff should be mindful that the Outcomes First Group's and school's safeguarding policies & procedures and Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy continue to apply, at all times when working online or offline at any location.

27.6.1 Acorn Digital Learning have produced a Live Online Risk Assessment, and Student Remote Learning policy and template, that have been shared with all Outcomes First Group schools and can be utilised as required.

27.6.2 Data protection and GDPR considerations must be taken into account. This includes rules on signing pupils up to online services, and staff accessing personal data when working at home. It is recommended that staff are regularly reminded of the data protection and GDPR policies and procedures, whether they are working from school or remotely.

27.6.3 The guidelines for digital learning below must be followed:

- Ensure parents and carers are aware of online safety advice and resources such as [Thinkuknow](#) and [Safer Internet Centre](#)
- A link to [ParentInfo](#) should be on the school's website – this DfE backed website provides parents with up-to-date information about a range of topics.
- If staff are concerned about a comment made online by a pupil or the work they share, the staff member should take a screen shot and report it to the DSL via MyConcern / CPOMS (or the school's existing protocol as long as it is secure).
- Staff and pupils should be fully dressed and take into account the background/surroundings. Staff should use a communal area, and anything in the background that could cause concern or identify family members/ personal information, should be removed or a sheet should be used.
- The teacher may need to give guidance to pupils to remove items from view. If a pupil is inappropriately dressed or in an unsuitable setting (e.g. a bedroom) they must be removed from the video call.
- Staff must not enter into one-to-one tuition voice or video call with an individual pupil or student without SLT agreement. If there is a need for single pupil interaction, please ensure that a colleague is added to the call, or that a parent is present with the pupil
- If a staff member urgently needs to call a parent or pupil from their personal phone, the number must be withheld by dialling 141 first and a record of the call must be made (e.g. an email to the HSM, DH or DSL to explain the purpose of the call and any actions taken as a result of it)

- Home filters may block different content at a different level to the school's filtering software; if this appears to be the case for one pupil in the group the teacher should revert to or suggest an alternative resource.
- Take care that any material provided to students to watch is age and developmentally appropriate. For instance, do not ask Year 9 pupils to watch a film with a 15 rating.
- Staff should model good online behaviour in all ways, including the language used to interact with pupils and colleagues, which should be respectful at all times
- School leaders should make clear to staff the operating times for online learning (for example, only during the normal school day); no staff member should engage with or respond to any pupil outside these times.
- Clear guidelines for students connecting to a virtual classroom session will be given by the school and the teacher will check their understanding.
- The same principles apply to virtual meetings between staff and parents as face-to-face meetings

27.7 Home visits

Where staff need to make home visits, they should be mindful of their own wellbeing and safety if conducting visits to the homes of children and their families. Follow the school's lone working procedure and guidance. This should prescribe that you must at least inform another member of staff of your whereabouts and the time you plan to return to the school. Wherever possible, arrange for a colleague to accompany you. This is particularly important for visiting households with identified risks to the safety of professionals. You should discuss and assess those risks with the appropriate local authority.

28.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum to ensure it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve. Where necessary, updates will be made during the year.