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**Child protection and safeguarding children policy**

**Key contacts for safeguarding and child protection at school**

DSL (Designated safeguarding lead): Natasha Clough

DSL (Designated safeguarding lead): Eleanor Benson

LADO (Local authority designated officer):

Telephone- 01772 536 694

Email- [LADO.Admin@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:LADO.Admin@lancashire.gov.uk)

Local authority safeguarding contact numbers and emails:

During office hours: 0300 123 6701

Out of office hours: 0300 123 6722

**Purpose of policy**

Refresh Education fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our students’ welfare and safety are at the heart of our school’s ethos and in everything we do.

In this policy, a ‘child’ means all children and young people below 18 years of age.

In accordance with relevant law and guidance this policy details our procedures for safeguarding and child protection. It is applicable to the whole school community. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility, whether they work or volunteer in the school.

Everyone has a role to play in child protection and safeguarding. The school - where appropriate - adopts a whole-school approach to safeguarding children. All staff and volunteers will ensure that their approach and actions are child-centered– putting the wishes and feelings of victims at the heart of any safeguarding response. This means that they’ll consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

We will work together with the local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

These are the foundations on which all of Refresh Education’s safeguarding, child protection, and welfare systems are built:

* Ensuring that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and child protection.

 • Ensuring that all staff are trained to understand the risk factors for all child protection, safeguarding and welfare concerns and know the indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and know the appropriate reporting mechanism.

• Creating and maintaining an environment where all students feel secure, are encouraged to communicate, and are listened to.

• Ensuring that every student understands that they can report any concern to any member of staff, knowing they will be believed and never made to feel like raising a concern is a problem (contact details will always be available for students and posters with the appropriate advice will be visible to students around school).

• Ensuring that staff listen to victims well and know how to report any concerns about sexual violence or harassment between peers.

• Having a procedure to deal with any issues of peer-on-peer abuse which includes a robust and credible reporting system which is well-promoted, accessible, and simple to understand.

 • Ensuring a zero-tolerance attitude towards any form of peer-on-peer harassment or sexual violence and responding appropriately to issues we encounter.

 • Ensuring all staff understand that, even when it isn’t formally reported, harassment and sexual violence is happening.

 • Teaching students to keep themselves safe, including online, from all forms of abuse, bullying, harassment, or exploitation.

 • Swiftly and effectively addressing any child protection or safeguarding concerns and ensuring robust, timely referrals are made to other agencies in line with local safeguarding protocols.

• Ensuring effective links with relevant agencies in all matters regarding safeguarding and child protection, including Early Help procedures.

• Supporting students who are subject to child protection plans and contributing to the implementation of the plan.

• Ensuring that the cohort of students who have a social worker, or have been or are currently looked after, are supported to stay in education and achieve good educational outcomes.

• Keeping meticulous, written records of concerns about students, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately (this includes recording dates, times, people responsible, and actions), and ensuring all records are kept securely and shared appropriately.

• Ensuring the suitability of all staff through safe recruitment practice and maintaining an accurate and up-to-date Single Central Record.

• Maintaining clear procedures in line with the latest guidance for reporting allegations against staff members.

• Ensuring that parents and carers also have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff for safeguarding and child protection.

• Maintaining awareness of those students who are persistently absent or missing from school, notifying the Local Authority in line with ‘Children Missing in Education’ protocols.

Furthermore, Refresh Education recognises that:

• Some students are at increased risk of abuse.

 • Some students face additional barriers with respect to recognising or disclosing abuse. The school is committed to recognising diversity and ensures anti-discriminatory practices. We ensure that all students have the same protection.

We give special consideration to students who:

• Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities

• Are young carers.

 • Show signs of mental health problems.

• Are missing education.

 • May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification, or sexuality.

 • Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.

 • Are asylum seekers.

 • Have English as an additional language.

• Are known to be living in difficult situations e.g. where there are issues at home, such as substance abuse/misuse, domestic abuse, or where a family member is in prison or has mental health needs.

 • Are at risk due to either their own or a family member’s mental health needs.

• Are within the care system and are looked after or have been previously looked after or have a social worker

Have a parent/carer who has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

**Safeguarding children**

Refresh education recognises that safeguarding covers a broad range of areas, and it aims to achieve the following:

 • Protecting children from maltreatment.

• Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health and/or development.

• Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

 • Enabling children to have optimum life chances, so they can enter adulthood successfully.

 • Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

 As part of meeting a child’s needs, Refresh Education recognises that sharing information, particularly with safeguarding partner agencies and other professionals, in a timely manner is crucial in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect.

• Knows that fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

 The school recognises the government’s seven golden rules of information sharing. Where any doubt exists, staff will seek support from the DSL.

• Recognises that, to facilitate the sharing of ‘special category personal data,’ the DPA 2018 contains ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent. If it is not possible to gain consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent.

 • Recognises the importance of confidentiality in all data the school holds and in particular in relation to safeguarding and child protection records.

 • Will identify children who may benefit from the Early Help process and make timely disclosures to the Local Authority to enable that process to begin, working with safeguarding partners and other professionals to assist with these assessments and work flowing from these assessments.

• Recognises that mental health issues can be an indicator of abuse and neglect, and will share any such concerns appropriately.

 • Will identify students who may be suffering from significant harm and make child protection referrals

 • Will identify students who need extra help and make appropriate referrals, including to early help processes, to prevent concerns escalating.

Refresh Education also understands the importance of contextual safeguarding, i.e. that incidents or behaviours can be associated with factors outside home or school and can occur between children outside of school.

All staff should be considering wider environmental factors that are present in a child’s life which are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

This information will also form a part of any referrals the school makes, if the school considers this appropriate.

Refresh Education also recognises the importance of partnership working to keep students safe.

**Legislation and guidance**

This policy for Refresh Education is derived from a variety of legislative provisions and statutory guidance.

In particular, it is based on good practice found in:

• Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023).

 • Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the 2023 updated version.

• Governance Handbook.

The following legislation is also incorporated into this policy:

• The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which gives a broad framework for the care and protection of children and includes provisions for Local Authority inquiries, care proceedings, and emergency provisions.

• Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 S 5B(11), as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover/find that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Responsibilities for safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM are found in Statutory Guidance on FGM.

• The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 which outlines provisions for when people with criminal convictions can work with children.

• ‘Regulated activity’ in relation to children is found in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

• Schools’ “PREVENT” duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism can be found in: Statutory Guidance on the Prevent Duty.

Other statutory provisions and guidance relevant to child protection and safeguarding include:

• The Education Act 2002 (Section 175).

• The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 Schedule 2, which covers information which must be entered into the Single Central Register, and Section 9, which stipulates that at least one person per interview panel must be trained in safer recruitment.

• The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

• The Sexual Offences Act, 2003, Home Office.

• Teaching Online Safety in Schools, 2019, DfE.

• Guidance on Sharing Information.

• Guidance on Peer-on-Peer Sexual Abuse.

• Guidance on Nudes and Semi-Nudes.

• Teaching Standards. Refresh Education has also read and incorporated Ofsted’s review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges published in June 2021 into this and connected policies and procedures. A full list of the guidance this policy has referred to, and which staff can refer to for further information.

**Academies, free, and independent schools**

 The duty for all academies - including free schools and all independent schools - to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school is set down in Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Refresh Education policy reflects these duties and complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Related Policies Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual young people. It also encompasses issues such as staff conduct, health and safety, bullying, online safety, arrangements for meeting medical needs, providing first aid and/or intimate care, drugs and substance misuse, positive behaviour management, and the use of physical intervention and restraint.

This document must therefore be read, used, and applied alongside the school policies and procedures referred to below:

• The Single Central Record of identity, qualification, and vetting checks for all staff and volunteers. • The staff safer recruitment and selection processes.

• Local Authority policies and procedures on dealing with allegations against members of staff.

• Guidelines for visitors.

• Safer working practices guidelines for staff and volunteers.

• E-safety and information technology/acceptable use policy/bring your own device policy.

• Staff code of conduct or low-level concern policy.

• Data protection policy and privacy notices.

 • Attendance policy.

• Curriculum policy.

• Online safety policy.

• Mobile phone use policy.

• Behaviour policy.

• Anti-bullying policy.

• Equality and diversity policy.

• Relationships and sex education policy.

• The health and safety policy (including First aid)

• SEN policy

• The whistleblowing policy

**Responsibilities**

Refresh Education recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their parents, those with parental responsibility or carers has a role to play in safeguarding children.

All staff who work directly with children must read Part One and Annex B of 2024.

All staff must

• Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

• Be able and prepared to identify any child in need of early help.

• Be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, and will be supported and kept safe. Staff should never give the impression that reporting abuse causes problems, and victims should not feel ashamed.

• Be aware of the role of the DSL, including how and when to contact them.

• Follow the school’s reporting structures for safeguarding concerns which reflect those outlined in KCSIE 2024.

• Be able and prepared to deal with any safeguarding concern including knowing who to speak to and understand how to deal with sharing information and confidentiality issues.

• Be aware of, and act on, the contents of (a) this Child Protection Policy which covers all peer-on-peer abuse; (b) the Behaviour Policy (which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice, and discriminatory bullying); (c) the school’s Online Safety Policy. In addition, staff must be aware of and understand their Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy.

• Receive appropriate training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety), which is updated via email or bulletins at least annually or as required.

• Understand the child protection process, including Section 17 and Section 47 of the Children’s Act 1989 and multi-agency meetings, and be aware of local arrangements for the early help process (sometimes referred to as the common assessment framework), understanding their role in each.

• Be aware of what to do if a child tells them about being abused, neglected, or exploited.

• Be able to recognise physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect, as well as safeguarding issues surrounding child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) including county lines, peer-on-peer abuse, serious violence, Prevent-related issues, and female genital mutilation (FGM) - AND understand that often safeguarding issues overlap.

• Be aware that safeguarding concerns can be linked to or caused by factors in a child’s wider environment outside of the family, such as sexual and criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. This is often referred to as contextual safeguarding.

• Be aware that mental health issues can be a significant indicator of abuse or neglect.

• Be able to report concerns about safeguarding arrangements within their school and know not to hesitate before doing so. Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy 12

• Know what to do if a child is missing from education.

Further information to support staff to fulfil these responsibilities is contained throughout this policy and is covered in the schools safeguarding and related training programme

**Management will, as part of their responsibility:**

Be responsible for the implementation of this and all related policies and procedures, ensuring that the outcomes are monitored.

• Meet regularly and assess the effectiveness of safeguarding and the implementation of related policies.

• Ensure that the DSLs has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources to fulfil all of their functions

• Ensure that everyone connected to the school is aware of this policy including safeguarding and child protection procedures and online safety.

• Ensure that everyone connected with the school understands and follows this and connected policies.

• Ensures that everyone has appropriate training, including online training – at induction and regularly thereafter.

• Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement and welfare of students who are looked after and ensure that this person has appropriate training.

 • Take a risk-based approach to the information visitors to the school should receive.

 • Ensure safe recruitment practice is followed when recruiting for posts, and act as a case manager when an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. This includes being the recipient of any low-level concerns (i.e. those that do not meet the threshold).

• Ensure the school has a robust system for gathering all appropriate checks in relation to all staff, volunteers, and visitors.

• Ensure the school offers a safe environment via a robust health and safety policy and procedure to meet the statutory responsibilities for the safety of students and staff at the school.

 • The Designated Safeguarding leads are the leads for child protection and safeguarding in the school. This is one part of their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection, which also include:

 • Having the appropriate status and authority to carry out their role – deputies (if appointed) must be trained to the same standard as the DSL.

 • Having the time, support, training, funding, and resources to be able deliver all their functions as a DSL.

• Delegating certain functions (except lead responsibility) to the deputies, and deputies can be contacted when the DSL is away or absent from school.

The role of DSL includes:

• Being available in term time- this can (in exceptional circumstances) be via Skype or other media if they are not physically in school during term time for staff, volunteers, parents, or students to provide advice and support on child welfare, safeguarding, and child protection matters.

• Being the point of contact for staff who have a concern about a child’s welfare, safeguarding, or a child protection issue, including where the concern involves a mental health issue.

• Acting as a point of contact for safeguarding partners - for example, the police in relation to Operation Encompass - and, where required, taking part in and contributing to strategic discussions and inter-agency meetings, and supporting other staff to engage with this process.

• Liaising with other staff (as needed) - for example, pastoral teams or senior mental health leads and SENCos - when referring matters to children’s social care, so that the reports are as holistic as possible.

• Ensuring that account is taken of the risk to children outside of their families and considering whether children are at risk of abuse relating to exploitation and serious violence.

 • Where a safeguarding concern has a mental health element, ensuring discussions are had with the senior lead for mental health.

 • Managing referrals to the Local Authority Children’s Services or other services (such as the police where a crime has been committed), or to the Channel programme, or the DBS (where someone has been dismissed or has left because of the harm they have caused or the risk of harm they pose to children).

• Liaising with other agencies and partners in cases where early help is considered the most appropriate response and contributing to any ongoing support and further assessments.

• Working closely with children’s social care and any child’s social worker – in particular where there is a statutory response and ensuring that actions the school proposes to take do not jeopardise an ongoing investigation.

 • Where children’s social care do not investigate, the DSL should not be afraid to refer again or challenge the decision. If the decision remains not to investigate, the DSL should look for other support such as early help.

• Where there has been an allegation/report of sexual violence, the DSL will support by advising the school how to proceed, including undertaking an immediate risk assessment of need (risk 16 assessments should be considered on a case-by-case basis for reports of sexual harassment). The risk and needs assessment should include: - The victim and how best to support them. - Whether it is a single victim. - The alleged perpetrator. - Risks to other children. The risk assessment must be dynamic and retained in electronic form.

• Taking the lead role in any decisions about sexual violence or sexual harassment which are reported to the school.

• Where an allegation is proved to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the person who made the allegation is in need of support for other abuse – and whether the report could be a cry for help. If so, the DSL should consider whether or not to refer to children’s social care.

• Where there has been an allegation against a member of staff which is judged to meet the threshold (for referral to the LADO), ensuring the child is not at risk and determining whether or not the case should be referred to children’s social care as a suspected abuse case.

• Being aware of local protocols and arrangements in respect of the Prevent referrals.

• Being aware of local arrangements for Early Help.

• Being aware of all the local and national support systems in place for victims of sexual violence.

• Being the point of contact for all peer-on-peer reports and being aware of issues and supporting actions where consent or power balances are in issue - for example, in sexual violence reports.

• Making referrals (where appropriate) to the Cyber Choices programme when a child may be involved in cybercrime.

• Where a teacher reports FGM, deciding whether or not to refer the matter to children’s social care.

• Encouraging a culture of supportive engagement with parents/carers around safeguarding and child welfare – this is especially so in circumstances where the family may be encountering challenging circumstances.

 • Ensuring children’s views are heard by encouraging a culture of listening, taking account of their wishes and feelings, and building trust between children and staff so that communication and reporting issues is most effective.

• Working with a range of colleagues to promote the educational outcomes of ‘children in need’ by understanding the extra challenges this cohort can face because of the safeguarding/welfare or child protection issues they have been involved in.

 • Thinking about how the issues can affect attendance, engagement, and achievements for children.

 • Knowing the cohort of students who have or have had a social worker and ensuring their academic progress, attainment, and aspirations.

• Supporting teaching staff to help with any reasonable adjustments or extra support to assist the above group, recognising that even where statutory services support has ended, there can be long term consequences for the child.

• Sharing information (as appropriate) with staff to achieve these goals for this cohort.

• Providing support for staff so that they are confident about welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues - including during a referral process - and helping them to see the links between safeguarding and academic/pastoral support.

• In relation to child protection files the DSL must: - Keep clear, accurate, up-to-date records of any concerns, actions taken, and how these were followed up.

The DSL will also support staff to keep records in this way. Records must be held securely and only shared with those who need to know – in line with data legislation and regulations.

 Hold files separately from the main file.

Transfering them to a new school as soon as possible and no longer than 5 days after the transfer, or 5 days after the start of a new term if the transfer is not in term time.

The DSL must obtain a receipt for the file. - Consider whether or not it is appropriate to inform a new school that a child is involved in a Channel programme.

Have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support a care leaver and liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Where a perpetrator transfers schools, make the new school aware of potential risks, protective factors, and any ongoing support the child is receiving. In relation to policies and procedures, the DSL must ensure that:

• The school’s child protection policy and procedures are reviewed annually and always remains up to date – working with staff to achieve this

 • Staff have access to and understand the school’s child protection policy and procedures, and it is available publicly to parents, who should also be made aware of the school’s role in the child protection process.

• Staff are aware of local safeguarding arrangements.

• The DSL should also receive appropriate training (including Prevent) to undertake all their role and responsibilities, and this includes:

• Understanding about specific needs that can increase vulnerability as well as specific harms that put children at risk.

 • Understanding the assessment process for referrals to LA, including those relating to early help and child protection.

• Attending conferences so that they can be an effective participant in the process(es) and understand the importance of information sharing with other agencies.

 • Understanding how important their role is for providing information to children’s social care so that children can be safeguarded, and their welfare promoted.

 • Understanding the effect adverse childhood experiences and trauma can have on children, including the impact it can have on behaviour, mental health, and educational outcomes.

• Understanding and being alert to the specific vulnerable groups such as children in need, with SEND, or with other health conditions.

• Supporting the school with fulfilling its Prevent duty and stay up to date with the latest guidance in relation to Prevent.

• Being aware of local protocols and how to use them – for example, when contacting the police about 18 a serious violent sexual offence such as rape.

• Being aware of the contact details for the local housing authority so that any issues of homelessness can be referred correctly and swiftly.

• Understanding the risk for children posed by online activity, and the risk for specific groups, such as those with SEND.

• Understanding the barriers that stop children from reporting issues and how to build trust to help with this.

• Building a culture of listening and making sure the wishes and feelings of the children are considered, and encouraging staff in the measures the school may put in place to promote this.

• Having the ability to keep accurate, detailed, secure written records of safeguarding and welfare issues.

**Child protection and safeguarding procedures**

Where there is a child protection or safeguarding concern about a student, all staff at Refresh Education will follow the necessary child protection procedures if an incident occurs.

**If a DSL or deputy is not immediately available**

 • Where a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm, and the DSL or senior leader is not available, a referral should be made to children’s social care and/or the police immediately.

• Anyone can make a referral to the police in an emergency, or to children’s services if there is a child protection or safeguarding concern.

• Where staff have a concern about a student that does not raise an issue of either immediate harm or a risk of significant harm, the staff member should not delay but, in the first instance, speak to a member of the SLT or contact the Local Authority children’s services to determine the most appropriate way to proceed.

• This link will take you to the local referral arrangements in your area.

• Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action/share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

• Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

• Teaching staff and other designated professionals are responsible for reporting concerns relating to FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) and reporting is mandatory where either the individual: - Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or they - Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth. They can also discuss the concern with the DSL, who will offer support and help.

Where the DSL is available and a member of staff at Refresh Education suspects that any student may have been subject to abuse, neglect, or exploitation - or a student has suggested that abuse has taken place - the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the Deputy DSL if the DSL is off site, must be informed immediately.

The DSL will:

• Ensure the allegation is acted on immediately, no later than within the same school day.

• Determine the most appropriate course of action: - Where the allegation reveals a risk of significant harm or the student is in immediate danger, the DSL will refer the matter to the police and/or children’s social care. Children’s social care should respond within 1 day. There are a range of responses available to social care. If the concern meets their threshold for intervention, children’s social care will begin assessments and investigations under the Care Act 1989 (normally under Section 17 or 47). It may be that the DSL or a member of staff will be asked to be involved in these assessments – if this is the case, the DSL will offer support to all members of staff. - Where the risk is considered to be less serious, the DSL may start the procedure for Early Help. This may be a multi-agency response, and the school may be asked to lead on this process as the lead professional. Staff may be asked to have input in this process. If, at any time during Early Help, those involved consider the risk to the student has escalated, the matter must then be referred to children’s social care.

 Allegations or concerns about serious peer-on-peer abuse which require a safeguarding or child protection response (rather than being dealt with under the school's behaviour policy)

• In the case of a violent sexual assault or sexual harassment, Refresh Education will follow the latest procedures as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

• Staff must record the allegation and report it to the DSL immediately, but not investigate it themselves.

• The DSL will contact the Local Authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the advice of the police, if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.

• The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made, and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. Where there is a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

• The DSL can, where appropriate, contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Where a student’s behaviour causes significant harm to other students, staff should follow the child protection procedures for the school. The DSL will refer the child in line with the local area safeguarding protocol for these children.

Where the issue involves ‘sharing nude or semi nudes’ (also known as sexting) by using online communications, text, or image messaging, please refer to the online safety policy. The Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) also provides further guidance on sexting at https://www.ceop.police. uk/safety-centre/. Other guidance is available: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharingnudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

**Where there is an issue relating to radicalisation or extremism**

 • The DSL will be the first point of contact for any issues of concern in relation to extremism.

• If the DSL is not available, staff should speak with a member of the SLT or children’s social care. If it is an emergency situation, the member of staff should call 999 or the confidential anti-terror hotline: 0800 789321.

• There is also a dedicated phone line at the Department of Education which offers help and guidance to staff and governors: call 0207 340 7264 or email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk).

 • The DSL will assess the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel - the government’s programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism - or the local authority children’s social care team.

Where a student is identified as being at risk of exploitation, radicalisation, FGM, peer-on-peer sexual abuse, or becoming involved in serious violent crime

Where risk factors (such as a child with a mental health need, a parent in prison, persistent absences from school, or a risk of FGM) are present but there is no evidence of abuse or a particular risk, the DSL at Refresh Education will advise staff on preventative work that can be done either within the school or together with partners. This is often referred to as Early Help.

The DSL may decide to notify the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) so that a strategic overview can be maintained and any themes or common factors can be recognised. The school will set timelines, monitor and review the situation, and take appropriate steps or seek advice as required.

The DSL may also seek advice about undertaking an early help assessment and/or making a referral to social services or involving the Local Safeguarding Children’s Partnership. If, during or after assessment, the concerns about the student turn out to be more significant and meet the additional needs/complex need criteria, the DSL will refer the matter to the MASH.

It may be appropriate to speak with the student’s family. The DSL will take this decision and may well be the person who talks to the student’s family.

**Allegations against members of staff**

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (including supply teachers and volunteers) in relation to a student, it must be brought to the attention of the headteacher immediately.

In line with 2024, the school has two levels of allegation management. The first is allegations which meet the threshold, and the second is in relation to low-level concerns. Where the allegation meets the threshold, the headteacher will act as the “case manager”. They will conduct basic enquiries to ascertain whether there is any foundation to the allegation, and will liaise with the LADO and other authorities as appropriate. The case manager will follow the procedure detailed in KCSIE 2024.

The threshold may be met in the following circumstances:

• They have behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.

• They possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.

• They have behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

• They have behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children. This includes behaviour outside of school that might make the person unsuitable to work with children (known as a transferable risk). In some cases, allegations may be so serious that they will require immediate intervention by the police and/or children’s social care services. If this is the case, the headteacher will ensure that the appropriate action is taken.

Low-level concerns are those which do not meet the threshold for referral to a LADO or the police but, as part of an open culture to safeguarding, should be talked about. Everyone is encouraged to report low level concerns, even by way of a self-referral, so that inappropriate or concerning behaviours are dealt with early and professional boundaries are maintained.

A low level of concern would be where, for example, a member of staff behaved in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, but it isn’t considered serious enough to refer to the LADO such as a staff member being over-friendly with children, using inappropriate language, favouring a child or picking on a child, making inappropriate social media posts, making fun of a child’s work, making fun of a child in front of other children, or accompanying a child home from an event alone (albeit with the parent’s consent).

Low-level concerns will be dealt with efficiently and appropriately in line with the staff code of conduct and, where appropriate, any other relevant school policy - for example, the data protection policy.

In the event of a low-level concern being raised with the headteacher, they will:

• Collect evidence from witnesses and from the person concerned.

 • Collate the information and advise what actions should be taken – this could range from a conversation with the person to a warning or formal disciplinary proceedings.

• Keep a record of the concerns. All information will be held in confidence and securely, in line with data protection laws (the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR). Records will be reviewed regularly to identify any patterns or systematic issues within the school.

Patterns of staff behaviour could result in a more serious concern that meets the threshold test or results in disciplinary action for an individual. Records will be maintained in line with Refresh Education's Data Retention and Disposal Policy and Procedure.

**Suitability of staff and safe recruitment practices**

The school recognises that safe recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe environment for children and young people. Consequently, we will ensure that staff (including supply teachers) and volunteers working at the school are suitable to do so and therefore do not pose any kind of risk to our students. Appropriate members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are required to complete Safer Recruitment Training in order to ensure that one panel member on every selection panel is trained in ‘Safer Recruitment’.

**Complaints and whistleblowing**

Where a staff member at Refresh Education feels unable to raise an issue with the school, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them. Information about the school’s whistleblowing policy can be found in the staff handbook and on posters around school. General guidance on whistleblowing can be found on the government website.

The NSPCC’s “What You Can Do to Report Abuse” dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school.

Staff can call 0800 028 0285, which is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday, and email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**Training**

Refresh Education ensures all staff complete safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction.

This includes online safety and whistleblowing procedures and is designed to ensure all staff:

• Understand the school’s safeguarding systems

 • Their responsibilities

• They can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect or exploitation

• Know how to act upon any concerns they have.

All training is integrated, aligned, and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach, including training on the issues and expectations in relation to allegations of peer-on-peer abuse.

 Training is considered as part of wider staff training and curriculum planning. All training is in line with expectations and arrangements from our local safeguarding partners. It is also designed to support teachers to fulfil expectations through the Teachers’ Standards in respect to managing behaviour in the classroom and having a clear understanding of pupil needs.

The school also has a commitment to updating safeguarding training (including online safety) for all staff annually, and more regularly as required, through e-bulletins, CPD, or using the knowledge base of local partners or staff members

To achieve this:

• Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met.

• All staff and volunteers (where appropriate) who are new to the school will be given appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction programme to the school.

• Updates will feature regularly in all staff and SLT meetings, as appropriate.

• All school staff and Governing Body members will undertake the training.

• Newly recruited staff will complete training as part of their induction and will receive school-specific training, including being made aware of local risk factors for extremism.

• The DSL will attend Local Authority and other training courses as necessary and other appropriate inter-agency training every year.

• The DSL will attend Prevent training and this will be cascaded to all staff.

• Contractors will receive safeguarding training where required or when otherwise considered necessary

**Prevent duty - Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to extremism**

The school’s Prevent strategy

Refresh Education follows the statutory guidance on the school’s responsibility to fulfil our Prevent Duty. We are aware that there have been occasions, both locally and nationally, in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children to hold extreme views including those justifying political, religious, sexist, or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

The Prevent strategy aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It is rare for children to become involved in terrorist activity. However, some students from an early age can be exposed to terrorist and extremist influences or prejudiced views. Consequently, the school takes the view that early intervention is always preferable and includes this in its procedures as it does for all safeguarding concerns.

In line with both the fundamental British Values and the School Values, the following key principles underpin the community in which the school is based:

• Inclusion.

• Tolerance.

• Freedom of speech.

• The expression of beliefs and ideology.

Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility. Free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is subject to treating others with respect, understanding differences, equality, an awareness of human rights, community safety, and community cohesion.

The Prevent statutory guidance requires school to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are suitable, appropriately supervised, and undergo the same checks as other visitors. The school is committed to training all staff in connection with the issues arising from our Prevent Duty.

We are also committed to working with the Local Authority and other local partners to assess the potential risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism, because families and communities play a key role in ensuring young people and our communities are safe from the threat of terrorism.

The DSL will keep up-to-date with local threats, policies, and procedures relating to Prevent.

**Reducing risks of extremism**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with partners and the Local Authority’s risk assessment to determine the potential risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism.

Actions will include:

• Promoting spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development for students - this includes ensuring that the curriculum promotes fundamental British values.

• Creating an atmosphere of openness and safety so that students feel free and able to discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and extremism.

• Ensuring students are protected from accessing extremist content online whilst in school – appropriate filters are be used. The school recognises that the Prevent duty does not ask teachers to carry out unnecessary intrusions into family life, but, as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

**Potential signs of radicalisation and extremism**

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist/radical ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, all school staff will be vigilant to changes in students’ behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

It is commonly recognised that children at risk of radicalisation may display changes in behaviour, show different signs, or seek to hide their views. Staff are advised to use their professional judgement in identifying students who might be at risk of radicalisation and always act proportionately and seek support if they are concerned.

There is no limit to the signs that you might notice – every student is different. However, some of the indicators staff should look out for include:

• Becoming increasingly argumentative.

• Refusing to listen to different points of view.

• Being unwilling to engage with children who are different.

• Becoming abusive to children who are different.

• Embracing conspiracy theories.

• Feeling persecuted.

• Changing friends and appearance.

• Distancing themselves from old friends.

• No longer doing things they used to enjoy.

• Converting to a new religion.

• Being secretive and reluctant to discuss their whereabouts.

• Being sympathetic to extremist ideologies and groups.

• Online, changing their identity, having more than one online identity, spending a lot of time online or on the phone, accessing extremist online content, and joining or trying to join an extremist organisation.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most children or 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. For example, they may address mental health, relationships, or drug/alcohol issues.

**Abuse and neglect**

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

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children.

In many cases, multiple issues of abuse will overlap.

• Physical abuse: abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. • Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. 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 also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may also involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

• Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve: - Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. - Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by men, women, or other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer-on-peer abuse) and set out separately in this policy.

• Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy - for example, as a result of 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), or protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger. 29 - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers). - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Specific safeguarding concerns**

All staff at Refresh Education are aware of safeguarding issues that can put children at increased risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education, and sharing nudes or semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) can put children at an increased risk of danger.

**Warning signs of exploitation**

One of the main signs of abuse or exploitation is when a child goes missing from education, particularly repeatedly. This can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, but in particular, exploitation - including criminal exploitation and county lines and/or sexual exploitation.

Going missing from education can also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance misuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All staff should be aware of Refresh Education’s Unauthorised Absence and Children Missing from Education procedures.

**Child exploitation**

All staff should be aware that child criminal exploitation (CCE) – including county lines and child sexual exploitation (CSE) can involve both boys and girls - though boys and girls can be exploited using different methods and may present differently.

As with other types of abuse, there is an increasing risk of exploitation taking place or beginning through threats posed online.

Staff should also be aware:

• That children who have been exploited in this way are victims themselves – and that this is sometimes not recognised by professionals.

• That CCE can lead to CSE for both boys and girls

• Children can be moved from place to place in order to exploit them (trafficked).

• Children who have been involved in this type of abuse may need extra support to stay in education.

**Child criminal exploitation**

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate, or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

Children can be moved from area to area – this is known as trafficking. Involvement in this type of abuse can be as a direct result of threats of serious violence to the young person or their family. The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Further, it does not always involve physical contact but can happen exclusively online.

Examples of CCE include: young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs, money, or weapons including across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift, pickpocket, or steal vehicles, or forced into violent crime or making threats to other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

• Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.

• Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.

• Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.

• Misusing drugs and alcohol.

• Regularly missing school or education.

• Not taking part in education.

• Being involved in serious violence, carrying weapons, or vehicle crime.

Indicators for children who might be being exploited through county lines activity specifically are those who:

• Go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home.

• Have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime).

• Are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, and handing over and collecting money for drugs.

• Are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.

• Are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house’ or somewhere that is being ‘cuckooed’, or a hotel room where there is drug activity.

• Owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters.

• Have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

**Serious violent crime**

Some students may be drawn into serious violent crime. Staff need to be aware of the indicators that this may be happening to a student.

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.

• 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.

There are a 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.

• Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff who are concerned about any of these issues should, as with any other concern, speak to the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the Local Authority’s children’s social care team and the police, if appropriate. It may be that, if the concern is raised at an early stage, the student can be supported through the Early Help process.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual 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 • by threats of serious violence to the victims and their family. It can be a one-off or part of a series of acts over time, and can be opportunistic or organised abuse. It can be perpetrated by men or women, and peers can be involved.

Victims of this type of abuse can be male or female. The victim may be subject to criminal exploitation and may be trafficked for the purpose of exploitation. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the activity appears consensual.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam.

CSE may also occur without the victim’s immediate knowledge - for example, through others making copies of recordings or images.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

• Underage sexual activity.

• Inappropriate or risky sexual or sexualised behaviour.

• Repeated sexually transmitted infections.

• In girls, repeated pregnancy, abortions, and miscarriage.

• Receiving unexplained or unaffordable gifts or gifts from unknown sources.

• Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends.

• Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are.

• Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults.

• Having older boyfriends or girlfriends, or hanging out with groups of older people.

• Being involved in abusive relationships, intimidated, and fearful of certain people or situations.

• Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation.

• Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations.

• Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether.

• Unexplained changes in appearance, behaviour, or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, etc.).

• Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders.

• Drug or alcohol misuse.

• Getting involved in crime.

• Police involvement, police records.

• Being involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership.

• Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

**Honour-based abuse:**

Forced Marriage (FM)

This is an entirely separate issue from an arranged marriage. Forced Marriage is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic abuse. It is also a criminal offence to force a person to marry in England and Wales.

Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Evidence shows that the issue of forced marriage affects certain sectors of communities, typically girls in the age range of 14 – 16 years old originating from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh (approx. 60% of the cases) together with a percentage of cases of children originating from the Middle-East and African countries. However, it can affect boys and children with SEND A signal of FM is the removal of the child from school and lengthy absence which is often unexplained.

Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Whistleblowing may come from younger siblings. Any member of staff at Refresh Education with any concerns should report this immediately to the DSL, who should raise the concern with the Local Police Safeguarding Unit by email or phone.

Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Whilst the onus of the investigation for criminal offences will remain with the Police, the DSL should co-operate and liaise with the relevant agencies in line with current child protection responsibilities.

**Honour-based abuse:**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

There is a specific legal duty on teachers regarding FGM. If, during the course of their work, a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 years, then they must report it to the police.

All staff at Refresh Education will recognise this responsibility.

The ‘One Chance’ rule. As with Forced Marriage, there is the ‘One Chance’ rule regarding FGM. This refers to staff potentially only having one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus may only have one chance to save a life. It is essential that the school takes action without delay.

**What is FGM?**

Female genital mutilation involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Why is it carried out?

It is often based on a belief that FGM:

• Brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage.

• Is part of being a woman/rite of passage.

• Upholds family honour.

• Fulfils a religious requirement.

• Helps girls be clean/hygienic.

• Is cosmetically desirable.

• Makes childbirth easier – this is a mistaken belief. FGM is a criminal offence.

All staff at Refresh Education will be made aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms, and other indicators of FGM. All teachers have a mandatory responsibility to report FGM if they discover, in the course of their professional duties what appears to be FGM to the police. The DSL, who will offer support, should also be informed immediately.

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening include:

• The child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony.

• The child and their family taking a long trip abroad.

• The child’s family being from one of the ‘at risk’ communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemen, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia, and Pakistan).

• Knowledge that the child’s sibling has undergone FGM.

• The child talking about going abroad to be ‘cut’ or to prepare for marriage.

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

• Prolonged absence from school and other activities.

• Behaviour changes on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued.

• Bladder or menstrual problems.

• Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable.

• Complaining about pain between the legs.

• Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.

• Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group.

• Reluctance to take part in physical activity.

• Repeated urinal tract infections.

• Disclosure of abuse.

Further guidance and information are available from:

NSPCC FGM Helpline

Contact days and times: 24 hours Tel: 0800 028 3550 Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

**Peer-on-peer abuse**

All staff at Refresh Education must be aware that children can abuse other children (referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

• Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudiced-based, and discriminatory bullying.

• Physical abuse, such as hitting, biting, kicking, shaking, hair-pulling, or causing physical harm.

• Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault.

• Sexual harassment and online sexual harassment, such as that which takes place on social media or chat rooms, which may be stand- alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.

• Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

• Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery).

• Upskirting, which is a form of abuse that has been high on school and court agendas for a number of years and is a criminal offence in its own right under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019. Upskirting occurs when someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing, with or without underwear, without permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. It is a common aspect of peer-on-peer abuse and can happen to any gender.

• 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. It may also include an online element.

**Identifying peer-on-peer abuse & understanding consent**

Every student will react differently, but some recognised indicators of peer-on-peer abuse are:

• Bleeding, bruising, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), or pregnancy.

• Becoming withdrawn or displaying other behaviour changes.

• Being fearful of being in school or online.

• Missing education.

• Self-harming.

• Displaying behaviours beyond their stage of development.

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal, or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

• A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;

• The age of consent is 16;

• Sexual intercourse without consent is rape. Most issues of peer-on-peer abuse can be dealt with through the school’s behaviour policy, but where the behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, it falls within the scope of this child protection and safeguarding children policy.

The school recognises that it is important to educate students to understand:

• What constitutes appropriate behaviour – including online.

• Issues around consent.

• Issues around discrimination and misogamy.

• Where the criminal law fits into this type of behaviour. The school recognises that peer-on-peer abuse is a problem and is happening, even when the issues are not reported. This sort of abuse has a serious impact on those who are victims, in terms of self esteem and relationships but also educational outcomes.

Consequently, Refresh Education has put in place procedures and expectations based on the following:

• This type of abuse takes place in school, outside of school, and online. It can affect any age of child but is predominantly an issue for secondary and college age groups.

• Staff must maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

• Downplaying inappropriate behaviour can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour and can lead ultimately to normalisation of abuse. It will not be tolerated – we have a zero-tolerance approach to this issue.

• Staff must intervene in “inappropriate” behaviour, which can prevent it from escalating to abusive or violent behaviour.

• It is crucial to have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and an important part in this is not tolerating or laughing off sexual banter or jokes.

• Victims of this type of abuse are likely to be distressed and there is a likelihood of it affecting their educational attainment – this is more likely where the alleged perpetrators attend the same school or college.

• Girls are more likely to be victims and boys are more likely perpetrators – however, any report or suspicion should be taken seriously.

• The abuse can be perpetrated by an individual or a group.

• Sexual violence can happen in intimate relationships between peers.

• There can be links between this type of abuse and sexual and criminal exploitation.

• Some children may face additional barriers in reporting because of vulnerabilities, disabilities, sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

• Procedures that we put in place to deal with issues of sexual violence or harassment must be clear, easily accessible, and well-promoted, so that children feel confident in reporting abuse.

• Staff must be aware of behaviour in children that might indicate there is an issue with sexual harassment or violence and act immediately.

• Responding to each incident well will build a trust in the systems so that victims will feel able to come forward in future.

• It is extremely important to listen and react to the child’s report (listening well and not asking leading questions).

• Whilst victims’ wishes and feelings are of paramount importance, a school should not forget to balance this with its duty to protect other children.

• Where a report is found to be malicious or unfounded, the school should consider what the most appropriate step should be – it might be that the person has been abused by someone else or the allegation might be a cry for help. If the report was deliberately made up, the school will consider using disciplinary processes.

• All staff should understand the consequences of sexual violence and be aware of all of the available resources for victims but also for perpetrators – many of which are linked at the end of the section.

• It is important to look for patterns in all reports and identify any broader issues that need to be addressed. All staff have been asked to read the guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children here, which contains detailed information on a range of relevant topics (e.g. definitions, contextual issues such as power and coercion, and advice on a whole-school approach).

Sharing nude/semi-nude images (sexting)

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident If you are made aware of an incident involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images (also known as sexting and ‘youth-produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

• View, download, or share the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL.

• Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.

• Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility).

• Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves, or their, or other, parents and/or carers.

• Say or do anything to blame or shame any student involved. You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Further information can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and young-people

Students should be made aware of this information so that they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

**Children missing education**

All students, regardless of their circumstances or background, are entitled to full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs and disabilities.

The school operates a strong attendance tracking system that is overseen by a member of the leadership team. The tracking and use of effective attendance management strategies enables the school to ensure each day that every child is accounted for.

The school takes a range of actions to tackle Persistent Absentees and works in conjunction with the referring school or local authority to create a plan to ensure improved and acceptable levels of attendance.

The school will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. The headteacher, or deputy in their absence, will determine the length of time that the child can be away from the school.

The school recognises that some children seeking leave of absence are vulnerable to risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or travelling to conflict zones, or at risk of FGM or Forced Marriage.

Staff are trained to look out for these triggers and the school works in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure localised risks are particularly taken note of and shared with all staff. Staff who have pastoral responsibility undergo training on attendance and safeguarding issues on an annual basis. Where this is identified, staff should alert the DSL and Headteacher. The DSL will, as soon as a concern is established, alert the Local Authority.

As a matter of course: student absence must be followed up on a daily basis – this must be a priority. The school holds more than one contact number for each child. Unless circumstances indicate that a student is at risk and immediate action is necessary, the Local Authority will be informed of every student who has a continuous period of unexplained absence of three days or more.

The admissions register at the school is kept up to date and the Local Authority is informed of all students who are removed from the school roll when they:

• Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. via home education.

• Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.

• Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

• Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.

• Have been permanently excluded.

The Local Authority will be informed as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, in line with the local authority guidelines, but no later than at the point of deleting the student’s name from the roll.

No student will be removed from a school roll until all safeguarding checks have been completed or the whereabouts of a student have been established.

**Elective Home Education**

Where the school is informed by parents of a decision to home educate their child, the school will inform the Local Authority and contribute to any meetings.

**Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse (often referred to as domestic violence) refers to any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

It can occur in intimate relationships between older children. Exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

**Operation Encompass**

This initiative helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children who have been involved in domestic abuse. When the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the DSL) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date and relevant information about the child’s circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. DSLs should endeavour to alert relevant pastoral support staff as soon as possible where this is appropriate.

**Online safety**

Refresh Education’s online safety policy and other connected policies and agreements can be found on the school website or upon request.

These are updated annually and as required. All staff must understand that threats to children from online activity are increasingly a factor in many types of abuse.

All staff should be aware that these risks also evolve and change. All staff are trained in online safety in conjunction with their safeguarding training.

As these threats are dynamic and evolve, the school keeps staff awareness up-to-date through regular bulletins and training.

**Looked after children**

All staff in Refresh Education will have an awareness of issues around safeguarding looked after children. The leadership team will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe.

Staff are aware that looked after children (and those previously looked after) may have extra needs and may need extra support to achieve desired education outcomes.

Staff will be aware of the legal status of a looked after child’s care arrangements. In particular, they will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a student’s looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

They should also have information about the student’s care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the student’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the student.

The headteacher will appoint a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of students who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training. The role of this teacher is to work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked after and previously looked after children are quickly and effectively responded to.

**Liaison with the virtual head**

The school’s Designated Teacher for looked after children will work with the virtual school head to monitor the child’s welfare, promote their educational achievement, and discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of the child and meet the needs identified in the student’s personal education plan.

**Pupils with a social worker**

We recognise that children with social workers can need extra support. A child’s experiences of adversity and trauma last for many years and can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children and will help with any reasonable adjustments individuals in this cohort may need. Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil’s safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

• Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.

• The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

**Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities, or health issues**

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

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

• The fact that these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying) than other children.

• The fact that these children are at increased risk of abuse and exploitation whether from peers, those who seek to harm children, or criminal gangs.

• The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions to be disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

• Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

• The school therefore looks to address this issue through raising awareness amongst staff, offering tailored pastoral support, and ensuring communication with children in these groups is effective. It may also involve referral to CAMHS or supporting any such referral.

The school wellness programme encourages shared experiences amongst peers – this includes 1:1 drop in sessions with all pupils to ensure lines of communication are open.

**Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare and can pose serious safeguarding and child protection risks. There is also now a Homelessness Duty imposed through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which places a duty on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. This extends to all social services functions, including Early Help, and is intended to increase early identification and intervention.

Earlier intervention can help prevent children and young people becoming homeless. Where a child is – or is at risk of – becoming homeless and has also been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children’s social care.

**Confidentiality and record-keeping**

Staff at Refresh Education have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the DSL and potentially external investigating agencies, where possible, under the guidance of the DSL. If a student confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the student sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the DSL. Accurate, signed, and dated written notes must be kept of all safeguarding and related incidents and child protection concerns relating to individual students. If a teacher or any other staff have a child protection concern, they should inform the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible. These will be kept on the student’s child protection file.

Arrangement for child protection documentations must comply with the schools Data Protection Policy together with data protection law and regulation applicable at the time.

The DSL will ensure that all child protection records are held separately from other student records. Child protection files and documents will be stored securely, by encryption and/or password protecting electronic files.

All staff are trained to use the systems, which are access controlled. All paper records are stored in a locked cabinet with restricted access.

Information from child protection files will only be shared with relevant staff when it is necessary to do so (following the government’s seven golden rules for data sharing) and in a manner that is consistent with data protection law.

If the school receives a request for direct access to, or copies of, school documentation held on a child protection file, the Headteacher and DSL will be informed and a decision taken on the appropriate way forward in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

It may be that the school’s Data Protection Officer will be consulted or further legal advice sought. In the event of a student who is being dealt with under the school’s child protection procedures transferring to another school, the school will:

• Find out the name of the receiving school (and, where appropriate, the Local Authority).

• Contact the relevant member of staff at that school to discuss the transfer. • Within 5 days of transfer - or 5 days after the start of term if the transfer is out of term time - securely send all information relating to the student to the receiving school (and, where relevant, the Local Authority).

• Check with the receiving school that the student has actually arrived there on the expected day (and inform all relevant agencies of the transfer).

• Consider whether or not it is appropriate to inform a new school that a child is involved in a Channel programme.

• Ensure that, where a perpetrator transfers schools, the new school is made aware of potential risks, protective factors, and any ongoing support the child is receiving. Any external individual or organisation contracted by the school to work with school students (for example, a child psychologist) must report any child protection incidents or disclosures from students to the headteacher or DSL at the earliest opportunity.

Such individuals, organisations or bodies will be required to work in accordance with the school’s child protection and safeguarding policy.

The school has in place data sharing agreements and complies with all relevant data sharing protocols.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

Where the school contracts with others to run activities in the school premises or grounds, appropriate safeguarding arrangements/expectations will form part of the contract.

**Working with parents/individuals with parental responsibility**

Refresh Education recognises the importance of working, where appropriate, in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of our students. The school will therefore:

• Make parents aware of the school’s statutory role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, including the duty to refer students on, where necessary, by making all policies available on the website and on request.

• Work with parents to support the needs of their child including raising awareness of threats posed online.

• Only notify the parents or carers where there is no increased the risk to the child or others by doing so. Wherever necessary, we will discuss this with the Local Authority children’s social care team before doing so.

• In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved if the proviso above is satisfied.

• Ensure a robust complaints system is in place to deal with issues raised by parents and carers.

• Provide advice and signpost parents and carers to other services where students need extra support.

**Health and safety**

The headteacher of Refresh Education will ensure that there is a robust, up-to-date Health and Safety Policy and Procedure to meet the statutory responsibility for the safety of students and staff at the school.

The headteacher will identify and manage health and safety through the use of risk assessments, which are carried out:

• On an annual basis for the school learning spaces and environment in and outdoors.

• For all school trips and educational visits.

• For students travelling between locations during the school day.

• For all work-based learning on work experience placements.

• When a student returns following an exclusion due to risky or violent behaviour.

• When there are any changes to the premises or practices.

• Following a serious accident in relation to staff and/or students.

• When there is a high-level risk associated with contact with parents.

• To maintain effective security of the premises including protection from intruders, trespassers, and/or criminal damage.

The school takes a risk-based approach to visitors and contractors on site. The normal procedure for visitors and contractors not working directly with children is that they will:

• Report to the school reception on arrival.

• Provide proof of identity.

• Wear a name badge at all times.

• Receive suitable supervision by school staff when on site.

• Be made aware of the arrangements for safeguarding and health and safety.

• Comply with the relevant vetting checks specified through the school’s recruitment process.

**Equal opportunities**

Refresh Education must take into account the Equality, Diversity, and Values Policy when discharging their duties under this policy.

**Ofsted inspections**

From September 2019, Ofsted’s inspections of schools will be carried out under Ofsted’s Education Framework. Inspectors will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective.

In addition, Ofsted publishes specific guidance to inspectors. You can find guidance documents at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills

**Monitoring and review of this policy**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Refresh Education will monitor the working of this policy and will report as required to the headteacher. It will be reviewed as required and annually.

**Procedures in respect of Child Abuse**

Early Help

If a child or family would benefit from support from multiple services then social care may request that an Early Help Assessment (EHA) is carried out first. The assessment aims to identify what kind of support the child or family needs in order to resolve the problem. Any child may benefit from early help, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child 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, or 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. The Early Help Assessment is a multi-agency assessment, often led by a lead professional, who could be a social worker or other professional who already provides support to the child and family. This person may be the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead.

It also needs to be undertaken with agreement from both the child and their parents or carers and must involve the child, the family, and any other professionals who are working with them. If the EHA results in the professional suspecting that the child is in need, or likely to suffer significant harm, then a referral should be made to social care straight away.

Once the referral has been accepted by social care, a multi-agency assessment - as detailed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 - is required to determine whether the child is in need, which services are appropriate, and what action to take.

Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for 53 the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. The purpose of the assessment is to:

• Assess if a child is in need. Section 17 explains that a child is in need when: they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving and maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority; their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or they are disabled.

• Gather important information about a child and family. Section 17 requires a local authority to, as far as possible, promote the upbringing of the child within the family and to ascertain the wishes and feelings of the child whilst balancing this with the child’s welfare.

• Analyse their needs and/or the nature and level of any risk and harm being suffered by the child.

• Decide whether the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

• Provide support to address those needs to improve the child’s outcomes and make them safe. The assessment is child-centred and all decisions must be made with the child’s best interests in mind. This includes focusing on outcomes that address the child’s needs, both within their family and the wider community, and seeing decisions from the child’s perspective.

Hearing the child’s voice and opinions is crucial. The assessment is also a continuous process, not a one-off event, and is regularly reviewed to ensure the child continues to receive the services that they need.

The social worker who carries out the assessment will analyse all information that they have about the child, including the results of any EHA, and clarify the child’s needs and level of risk that they may be facing.

As someone who works with the child you may be required to provide further information about the child and family. If the information gathered from the assessment results in the social worker suspecting that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, then a multi-agency strategy meeting/discussion must be held to decide what further action is needed.

This multi-agency strategy discussion will involve representatives from social care, the police, health services, and any other relevant services or people, such as the person who made the referral.  The discussion may be in person, over a telephone conference, or both, and can take place at any time from the moment of referral right through the assessment process.

**Section 47 enquiries**

Section 47 enquiries are necessary when there is a need to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child because they are suspected of suffering significant harm. Section 47 of the Children’s Act imposes a duty on local authorities to investigate when there is a child in their area who is:

• Subject to an emergency protection order;

• In police protection; or,

• Where the local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Under the Act, “the authority shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare”.

The enquiry is a dynamic process but usually involves:

• Speaking to the child who is the subject of concern to ascertain their wishes and feelings.

• Interviewing parents or carers and determining wider factors that may impact on the child and family.

• Systematically gathering information about the child’s and family’s history.

• Analysing the findings of the assessment.

• Undertaking appropriate medical tests, examinations, or observations to determine how the child’s health or development may be being impaired.

Local authority social workers are responsible for deciding what action to take and how to proceed following section 47 enquiries. Where concerns of significant harm are substantiated and the child is believed to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, social care will:

Convene an initial Child Protection Conference within 15 working days of the strategy discussion. Consider whether any professionals with specialist knowledge should be invited to participate.

Help prepare the child and parents if needed.

Social care may ask professionals who have contact with the child to contribute further information or attend the Child Protection Conference to help with the decision making.

These meetings are chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers who are employed by the local authority but act independently.

The meetings bring together professionals, gather evidence, and determine actions that are required to safeguard the child. If it is found that the concerns of significant harm are not substantiated, then social care should:

• Discuss the case with the child, their parents, or the professionals involved.

• Determine whether support from services is needed.

• Consider if the child’s health and development needs to be re-assessed.

If the local authority considers the child at risk of significant harm, or beyond parental control, then they will start the process of applying to the family courts for a Care Order under section 37 of the Children’s Act, or they will seek joint parental control under section 20 of the Children’s Act 1989.

Local Authorities assess each case against a threshold to ascertain which level of service, if any, is most suitable.

The image below represents the decision making of the continuum of need when making these assessments:

A diagram of a child's life cycle

Description automatically generated

**Guidance for all staff on dealing with disclosure**

Dealing with disclosures of abuse

• Always listen carefully and quietly. Do not press for any evidence at all.

• Remain calm and reassuring. Do not dismiss the disclosure and do not show distress or concern.

• Do not refute the allegation.

• Show that you care through open and reassuring facial expressions and body language.

• Do not interrogate or ask leading questions (it could later undermine a case).

• Ensure you take a written verbatim account of the child’s disclosure.

• Staff should be aware that written accounts could become part of a statutory assessment or criminal investigation.

• Where there is an online element, the key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. Where viewing images is unavoidable, the following link provides advice on how to respond: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-foreducation-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people 5

At this point, staff should take the following steps:

• Explain to the student that the disclosure must be reported – emphasise your trust in them.

• Do not promise to keep the allegation secret or that ‘everything will be alright.’

• Reassure the student by telling them that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not offer physical reassurance.

• Never make the child feel that they are wrong for bringing issues to your attention.

• Do not admonish in any way e.g. ‘I wish you had told me sooner.’

• Inform the DSL initially verbally.

• Under no circumstances discuss the matter with any other person. If the allegations prove to be untrue, any such discussion would be deemed defamatory. Information to staff is on a ‘need to know’ basis at the discretion of the DSL.

• If the child agrees, and it is appropriate, take them with you to the DSL.

• With the DSL, prepare a detailed report itemising:

• The information revealed by the student. It should not contain any opinion whatsoever.

• Actions taken by yourself, including when the suspicions were reported, to whom the suspicions were reported, and follow-up action taken within the school.

• Date and sign any written record of events and action taken and keep confidential and secure.

• You must keep, in absolute confidence, a copy of the report, as will the DSL.

• The DSL keeps Child Protection records centrally and securely and are not kept in the child’s file.

• All staff are under a duty to report all suspicions of abuse to the DSL (or as per the instructions in the main policy document where the DSL is not available.

• The DSL is responsible for passing on these concerns to children’s services.

• Accurate records are essential in the event of further investigations

• Any referral must include as much relevant information as possible.

If you see or hear something that is concerning:

• Don’t ignore it or assume that it is someone else’s responsibility to report it.

• Upload all information to the school’s safeguarding systems and seek advice immediately from your DSL

• Don’t feel silly – if it worries you, someone else needs to know.

• If it is something related to safeguarding, but not a child whose safety is immediately at risk, inform the appropriate Pastoral Leader or safeguarding officer in person and follow up with a one-line email notifying the DSL that there is a safeguarding concern.

• If it is related to a child being at risk, see the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately and definitely before the child goes home that day where possible.

• All staff may raise concerns directly with Children’s Services if they feel an incident is not being dealt with appropriately or they are unable to locate relevant staff.

• Concerns about adults in the school should be made directly to the headteacher

**The school’s statutory duty and guidance documents**

This policy sets out how Refresh Education will meet its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students. It has been developed in accordance with the law and guidance found at https://www.gov.uk/ that seeks to protect children.

Further guidance in relation to the safeguarding topics covered in this policy include:

• Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges.

• Working Together to Safeguard Children.

• Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation.

• Teaching Online Safety in Schools.

• Information About Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation.

• Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty.

• Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales.

• Inspecting Safeguarding in Maintained Schools and Academies.

• Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings.

• Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement.

• Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines.

• Sexual Offences Act.

• The Children Act 1989 and 2004 and The Education Act 2002.

• Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice.

• Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation.

• Learning Together to Be Safe - a toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism.

• The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England.

• <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/secondary-school-teachers-useful-information>

• https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards If anyone wishes to seek further information or guidance, they can refer to the above documents

**Child on child sexual violence and harassment**

When dealing with matters of child on child sexual violence and harassment, Refresh Education will follow guidance directly from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

**Refresh Education Safeguarding Systems**

Refresh Education uses EDGEN:IRIS MIS system throughout the school. This system allows staff to raise and report safeguarding concerns through a secure system.

All staff have access to the reporting feature where they can log low, medium and high level concerns. All concerns logged then flag, through the system , an email and additional alert for the school safeguarding team.

Alerts produced then allow the SG team to act or follow up on the report where appropriate and ensure that no concern is missed.

Follow- up actions such as additional call, meeting or further information can then be added to the initial report and enable the SG team to track the progress of each concern logged

Teaching staff do not have access to additional information unless deemed necessary by the SG team.

All safeguarding concerns are reported within 24 hours to the referring school and / or the local authority and logged on the child’s weekly report.

Update September 2024 to reflect KCSIE 2024:

1. Inclusion of exploitation when discussing abuse and neglect