

Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy

Approved: 01/10/2016

Review: 01/10/2017

SLT Liaison: J Skurr

Wardle Academy Policy



1. DETAILS

Named Staff/Personnel with Specific Responsibility for Child Protection

Designated Safeguarding Lead in School is: Jon Skurr 01706 373911 ext. 1077, Room B003

The Deputy DCCP in school is: Zoe Colley 01706 373 911 ext. 1065, Room B103

Nominated Governor: Mrs M Sackfield

Training for Designated Staff in School

DCPPS should refresh their multi-agency training regularly.

Name	Date	Provided by
Jon Skurr	July 2015	Working Together to Safeguard Children
Mrs Z Colley	June 2015	RBSCB

Whole School Child Protection Training

All staff should receive induction and a training update at regular intervals.

Who Attended	Date	Training Delivered By
All staff	September 2016	Jon Skurr
All Staff and Governors	September 2016	Hays on-line Safeguarding Certification
NQT	2016/17 TBC	Jon Skurr and Zoe Colley

Review Dates for This Policy

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom
July 2016	Policy brought in line with the latest guidelines as directed by the RBSCB. Prevent Guidelines included in line with LA Directives and statutory changes.	Neil Kirkham in conjunction with Jude Crabtree (LA Safeguarding officer) and Yasin Khan (LA Prevent Lead)
September 2016	Policy amended in line with update guidance September 2016.	Jon Skurr

2. PURPOSE OF A SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

An effective whole school Safeguarding/Child Protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with Safeguarding issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that Safeguarding concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which prioritise the needs of the child as outlined in the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (5th September 2016)'.

3. INTRODUCTION

Wardle Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding Policy:

1. **Prevention** - to create a positive school atmosphere where teaching and pastoral staff support pupils in school.
2. **Protection** - by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns/disclosures).
3. **Support** - to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused or suffering possible harm.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in school.

4. SCHOOL COMMITMENT

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, and especially those at risk of or who are suffering significant harm. Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. All pupils will be placed under the pastoral care of a Form Tutor, Head of Year and designated Pastoral Manager. This approach will allow pupils to establish relationships and build trust. This will ensure a consistent monitoring of pupil's welfare.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom pupils can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. This will be communicated to pupils through assemblies, noticeboards and RESPECT lessons.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for RESPECT (PSCHE) which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and / or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse. (See RESPECT/ PSCHE Curriculum for further information).
- Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills. (See RESPECT/ PSCHE Curriculum for further information).
- Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

5. FRAMEWORK

'Education staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage: referring those concerns to the appropriate organisation, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs using the Children's Needs and Response Framework and, in particular, using and embedding the Common Assessment Framework as an early intervention assessment tool. They will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the child's care or behaviour.'

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB).

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures. The names of those carrying these responsibilities in school for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to ensure that all staff have received adequate training and aware of the protocols and school policies around the safeguarding of young people

The role of the Head Teacher is to ensure that adequate provision is made for Safeguarding in terms of staffing, resources and training opportunities

The Governing body is accountable for ensuring that the education setting has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this guidance, and for monitoring the school's compliance with them. Neither the governing body, nor individual governors, have a role in dealing with individual cases or a right to know details of cases (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff). Some governing bodies have found it helpful for an individual member of the governing body to champion child protection issues within the school, liaise with the head teacher about them, and provide information and reports to the governing body. However, it is not usually appropriate for that person to take the lead in dealing with allegations of abuse made against the head teacher. That is the role of the chair of governors or, in the absence of a chair, the vice or deputy chair. Whether the governing body acts collectively or an individual member takes the lead, it is helpful if all members of the governing body undertake training about child protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

7. WHO IS AVAILABLE WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY TO OFFER ADVICE AND SUPPORT?

Education Safeguarding Officer 01706 925384

Education Welfare Service 01706 925115

Multi Agency Screening Service 0300 3030440

Out of Hours, Emergency Duty Social Work Team 01706 354836

Safeguarding Unit 0300 303 0350

Local Authority Designated Officer (Allegations of Professional Abuse) 01706 925635

Police Public Protection and Investigation Unit 0161 856 4810 (CP) 0161 850 8757 (DV)

8. PROCEDURES

Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures located at www.rbscb.org.

Staff will be kept informed about updates to the Child Protection procedures by staff inset training sessions at least annually or during directed time meetings. Information may also be shared via email and via shared systems, and on display in staff workrooms.

School will inform all staff of the correct protocols with regard to child protection. It will ensure that all staff complete the on line training and are certificated accordingly. New staff and NQTs will complete appropriate training as part of their induction. Ongoing training will be part of school's directed time programme. Safeguarding procedures and Designated Safeguarding staff will be displayed in all staff work rooms

School will inform parents of the school's duties and responsibilities under the Child Protection procedures via the school website.

9. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

'Our school will ensure that the Headteacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the nominated governor for Child Protection attend training relevant to their role' at regular intervals. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also attend Multi-Agency Child Protection training within this timescale.'

- All staff will receive online CP training on an annual basis.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be a holder of the RBSCB 'Working together to safeguard children' certificate or other equivalent qualification.

- Pastoral managers and Heads of Year will receive additional training through the REAL Trust or other recognised providers.
- NQTs will receive additional in house training as part of their induction/NQT training and internal communication via email as appropriate.
- Staff will be kept informed on current Child Protection issues through inset training.
- A culture will exist in school whereby all staff are encouraged to share any concerns that they may have with the DSL or any member of the Pastoral Management team. External advice will be sought from the RBSCB/MASS team when necessary.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

‘Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Child Protection’.

A clear understanding exists that a teacher/adult in school must never guarantee confidentiality to a child and it will be made clear to the young person at the disclosure stage that it may be necessary for the member of staff to discuss this matter with an appropriate colleague.

If asked by a young person to keep a secret, our policy is this is not a promise that we as responsible professionals are able to make. It will be made clear to the young person at the time that any information disclosed will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately but the recipient has a duty of care to report any concerns to the DSL within school.

Where there are concerns about a child, the school may seek advice from Multi Agency Screening Service (MASS) and will share these concerns on a referral to the appropriate agency (CCS, PPIU, Channel).

This information will be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis and will not be discussed unnecessarily or inappropriately with colleagues, pupils or other adults in or out of school. Parents may be contacted if it is felt that this sharing of information will not increase the risk of further harm to the child and where it will be of benefit to any necessary safeguarding intervention.

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others, (including Children’s Social Care staff and the police), must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of a child dictate that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

11. RECORDS AND MONITORING

Well-kept records are essential to good Child Protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records, or parts thereof, should be shared with other agencies. Our school recognises the importance of sharing important education and CP information at the point of a child’s transition to another education establishment. (RBSCB Information Sharing Protocol to be followed)

Guidance notes need to be removed Information relating to any concerns are recorded and kept securely on the School’s ‘Pastoral Drive’. Access to this drive is limited to key individuals in school who are responsible for the pastoral care of our young people. Any necessary information that is relevant to other colleagues will be shared appropriately via IEPs, PSPs, Health Plans etc.

When a concern is raised a written record of any conversation/interaction is taken. This is then to be brought to the DSL where it would usually be necessary for additional information to be acquired. Once again, any additional/relevant information is recorded and this information is shared with the appropriate agencies. Any statements are to be kept securely with the other CP documentation in a locked filing cabinet.

Referrals and historical CP information are kept securely in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the DSL. Only master key holders have access to this room and the filing cabinet key is kept in a secure location. restricted access to CP files is therefore assured

All child Protection files are kept securely in the DSL's office with restricted staff access with one key held by the DSL.

Files kept on the Pastoral drive will be accessed by Pastoral Heads of Year and Pastoral managers only. All CP information is shared on a 'need to know' basis.

12. CHILD PROTECTION FILES

- Teacher-held notes become part of a child's school records when a section 47 CP referral is made.
- Any CP concerns are recorded electronically and placed on a secure Pastoral drive by an appropriate pastoral manager.
- The monitoring records become of sufficient concern to warrant a referral when safeguarding thresholds are met
- Staff are briefed that in the respect of parental access to records no access is to be given except through the safeguarding officer who will firstly check with the MASS that records can be shared.
- In the event of a child transferring or leaving the school any ongoing CP work will be relayed to the designated Safeguarding Lead of the receiving school. There is a LA CP information sharing protocol in place which you will need to reference here

13. CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

The Initial Child Protection Conference brings together family members (and the child where appropriate), supporters/advocates and those professionals most involved with the child and family following a S47 enquiry. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer will attend any Child Protection Conferences. Training and support are available to staff who attend conferences through the Real Trust.

14. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

'Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider exclusion from school.

It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.'

This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families, in-line with appropriate confidentiality parameters;
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever possible and so long as it is in the child's best interests to do so;

- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in Child Protection situations.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school such as:

- School Security
- Staff Codes of Conduct – Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings (updated by Rochdale BC in May 2015)
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- E-safety

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol misuse, children may also be particularly vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

15. PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM RADICALISATION: THE PREVENT DUTY

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools/Colleges can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from child sexual exploitation, drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

The Prevent strategy aims to protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. While it remains rare for children and young people to become involved in terrorist activity, young people from an early age can be exposed to terrorist & extremist influences or prejudiced views. We recognise that as with other forms of safeguarding strategies, early intervention is always preferable. Our school/college is committed to working with other local partners, families and communities, and we will play a key role in ensuring young people and their communities are safe from the threat of terrorism.

We also recognise that our School a duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. Prevent can work within both violent and non-violent extremism arenas and can include topics such as hate crime, racism, bullying, on line safety and extreme political views.

Our School is committed to:

- Establishing a single point of contact in terms of safeguarding
- Assess risk of students being drawn into terrorism
- Develop an action plan to reduce the risk
- Train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism
- Refer vulnerable people to Channel
- Prohibit extremist speakers and events
- Manage access to extremist material - ICT filters
- Be confident about British Values.

We recognise that some young people, who are vulnerable to extreme views, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. We also recognise that their behaviour may be challenging at times and that some may cause offence or harm to others.

We will therefore always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils by:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting.
- Identifying children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to extreme views / radicalisation and taking appropriate action in accordance with the schools/colleges' safeguarding procedures with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school/college setting.
- Making appropriate referrals to the local authority for early intervention and support where necessary
- Ensuring that staff members or governors responsible for safeguarding are kept fully aware of their responsibilities by attending relevant training and briefings.
- Letting staff, parents and pupils know how to voice their concerns.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately in accordance with appropriate school/college policies and procedures.

Further departmental advice available [here](#).

16. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION & THE MANDATORY REPORTING DUTY

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers¹⁰, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. As a school, we acknowledge that it will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and clearly they will not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

¹⁰ Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides a definition for the term 'teacher'.

The Mandatory reporting duty commenced in October 2015 and teachers must report cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out to the police on the non-emergency 101 number. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school/college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. Further guidance available [here](#).

17. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Our school follows Rochdale Council CME guidance which outlines Rochdale Borough Council's systems for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing from education and the steps taken to identify those at risk.

In accordance with guidance, a child missing from education is defined as someone of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, not being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, in independent schools or in alternative provision) or who has been out of any educational provision for four weeks or more.

There are a number of reasons why children fall out of the education system, including when they:

- Fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- Cease to attend, failing to return after exclusion or withdrawal; or
- Fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. After moving to a new local authority).

Difficulties can also arise when children enter or leave provision where information is not routinely exchanged (e.g. between Independent Schools, Voluntary Organisations) or where arrangements straddle more than one Local Authority and where moves are between different countries.

18. FORCED MARRIAGE & HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE

Forced marriage is a human rights abuse. It can constitute both child abuse and sexual abuse. The United Nations considers it a form of trafficking, sexual slavery, and exploitation. Some, however, still see it as a private, personal, domestic, family, religious, or cultural issue.

A clear distinction must be made between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and many countries for a very long time. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the child/young person.

Forced marriage, whether a religious or civil ceremony, cannot be justified on religious grounds. Every major faith condemns it and freely given consent is a prerequisite of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh marriages

In forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved. Duress includes both physical and emotional pressure and abuse.

Forced marriage is primarily, but not exclusively, an issue of violence against females. Most cases involve young women and girls aged between 13 and 30, although there is evidence to suggest that as many as 15% of victims are male. The school/college follows Rochdale Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures for cases of dealing with forced marriage for a child/young person under 18 years of age and any individual in school/college who receives information, or has reason to believe that a child/young person is at risk of or subject to a forced marriage, should speak with the DSL in school/college who should then make a CP referral to MASS in line with the procedures. More information [here](#).

Honour based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture.

19. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

There is a strong commitment from all key partners under the banner of Project Phoenix to improve our collective knowledge and understanding of child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester and to develop a consistent and effective approach to identifying and responding to it.

Therefore, Phoenix has agreed to use the definition developed by the Children's Society in collaboration with young people, which is:

'Someone taking advantage of you sexually, for their own benefit. Through threats, bribes, violence, humiliation, or by telling you that they love you, they will have the power to get you to do sexual things for their own, or other people's benefit or enjoyment (including: touching or kissing private parts, sex, taking sexual photos).'

As in all cases, concerns that a child may be at risk of sexual exploitation will be discussed with the education establishment's DSL and a decision made as to whether there needs to be consultation with and a CP referral to Rochdale MASS.

Rochdale has a dedicated CSE team - 'Sunrise' based within the MASS and this team tackles sexual exploitation and related harm in the borough of Rochdale.

The team includes professionals from the police, children's social care, sexual health and Early Break.

They provide a safe and confidential environment where young people can go for help, advice and support. Children are offered a range of therapeutic interventions including one-to-one counselling, group-work sessions and drop-in support.

They also remind people about child sexual exploitation, so they know what it is and that it's happening. Working with schools we deliver preventative education programmes and provide specialist training to professionals so they know what signs to look out for.

20. SAFER SCHOOLS, SAFER STAFF

The principle concern would be a lack of staff training and their not knowing the responsibilities of every adult in school as well as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Hence the reason why our staff complete safeguarding training annually and the necessary Safeguarding information is prominently displayed in all staff workrooms.

Staff are aware of our policy and encouraged to avoid physical contact wherever possible. Staff are made aware of the dangers of being placed in compromising situations with students and the need for them to keep themselves safe. These include no contact out of school, in person or via social media. To avoid being placed in 1-2-1 situations wherever possible. Where this is not possible any meeting should take place with a door open or in a room with clear visibility into it. Wherever there is a concern, staff are advised to have 1-2-1 conversations with a colleague also present.

Staff are made aware of the need for conversations with young people to be appropriate to their role in school. Where advice is required by a young person in school, staff are instructed to refer the matter to a Pastoral Manager or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate support can be accessed, either through the school nurse or an outside agency.

All staff in school are subject to an Enhanced DBS check and other relevant checks as per the Keeping Children Safe in Education updated guidance 2016 and references from previous employers are sought.

All staff have been made aware of the current RBSCB policy on the Allegation Management Procedure and a copy of the procedure has been placed on a shared drive which staff have access to.

All staff who work in the school setting have previously been subject to a CRB check, now an enhanced DBS check as have any outside agency staff who visit our site. Any visitor to school has to sign in before being allowed access to our building and will be escorted and under the supervision of our staff for the duration of their visit. All visitors, whilst in our visitor reception are given a Safeguarding handbook which gives all necessary information on our guidelines, procedures and expectations.

21. SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

What Should Staff/Volunteers Do If They Have Concerns About a Child or Young Person in School?

Education professionals who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of abuse should pass any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in school; this should always occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Jon Skurr

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Zoe Colley

It is these senior colleagues who are responsible for taking action where the welfare or safety of children or young people is concerned. If staff are uncertain about whether their concerns are indeed 'Child Protection' then a discussion with their DSO/line manager will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action. Staff should never:

- Do nothing/assume that another agency or professional will act or is acting.
- Attempt to resolve the matter themselves.

What Should The DSL Consider Right at The Outset?

Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (By definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the priority / level and immediacy of risk / need and consider the Children's Needs and Response Framework?)

Can the level of need identified be met?

In or by the school or by accessing universal services/without referral to the MASS or other targeted services?

By working with the child, parents and colleagues?

By completion of a CAF or Early help support services with parents/carers/child & other professionals

What resources are available to me/the school and what are their limitations?

Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to the Multi Agency Screening Service requesting that an assessment of need be undertaken? (Section 17 Child in Need referral)

Is the level and/or likelihood of risk such that a Child Protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm? (Section 47 Child Protection referral)

What information is available to me: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?

What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be?

Who do/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?

Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support?

If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take? (e.g. time limited monitoring plan, discussion with parents or other professionals, recording, etc.)

Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the Designated Child Protection Person

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

Thresholds for Referral to the Multi Agency Screening Service (MASS)

Where a Designated Safeguarding Lead or line manager considers that a referral to the MASS may be required, there are two thresholds for (and their criteria) and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

Is this a Child in Need?

Under section 17 (s.17(10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is in need if:

- S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- S/he has a disability

Is this a Child Protection Matter?

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- is in Police Protection.
- there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold' that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a Child Protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of 'need' and when to refer using the Children's Needs and Response continuum and ensure that if the child has an open CAF that this information is attached as part of the referral to MASS.

22. MAKING REFERRALS TO THE MASS (GUIDANCE FOR THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD)

Child in Need/Section 17 Referrals

The DSL should look with other services as part of the Early Help Strategy to complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and copy this to: caf.team@rochdale.gov.uk

This is a request for assessment/support/services and, as such, you must obtain the consent of the parent(s) (and child/young person where appropriate), this should be identified on the CAF

Where a parent/child/young person refuses to consent, you should make clear your ongoing plans and responsibilities in respect of support, monitoring etc., and the possibility of a Child Protection referral at some point in future if things deteriorate or do not improve. (This is not about threats or saying that this is inevitable but about openness and transparency in dealings with parents).

Child Protection

Use the multi-agency referral form (MARF found at www.rbscb.org) for referrals to the Multi Agency Screening Service where it is considered that a child may be at risk of or suffering significant harm. If a CAF is in place, then this information must form part of the CP referral and the DSL completes the front sheet of the multi-agency referral form.

You do not require the consent of a parent or child/young person to make a Child Protection referral.

A parent should, under most circumstances, be informed by the referrer that a Child Protection referral is to be made. The criteria for not informing parents are:

- Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child(ren), to another member in the family home or to a professional; or
- Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede an investigation that may need to be undertaken;
- Because there would be an undue delay caused by seeking consent which would not serve the child's best interests.

See the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures on the RBSCB website for the occasions when parents/carers should not be informed.

Fear of jeopardising a hard won relationship with parents because of a need to refer is not sufficient justification for not telling them that you need to refer. To the contrary, this lack of openness will do little to foster ongoing trust, particularly as the source of referrals will be disclosed to parents except in a limited number of circumstances. If you feel that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents, then you should seek advice and/or make this clear on the referral or in any telephone contact with the Multi Agency Screening Service.

23. THE MASS RESPONSES TO REFERRALS AND TIMESCALES

In response to a referral, the MASS may decide to:

- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
- Refer on to another agency who can provide services;
- Undertake an Assessment;
- Convene a Strategy Meeting for referrals under Section 47 of the Children Act;
- Provide support services under Section 17;
- Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference;
- Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
- Make an application to court for an Order;
- Suggest to referring agency that a CAF be completed.

24. FEEDBACK FROM THE MASS

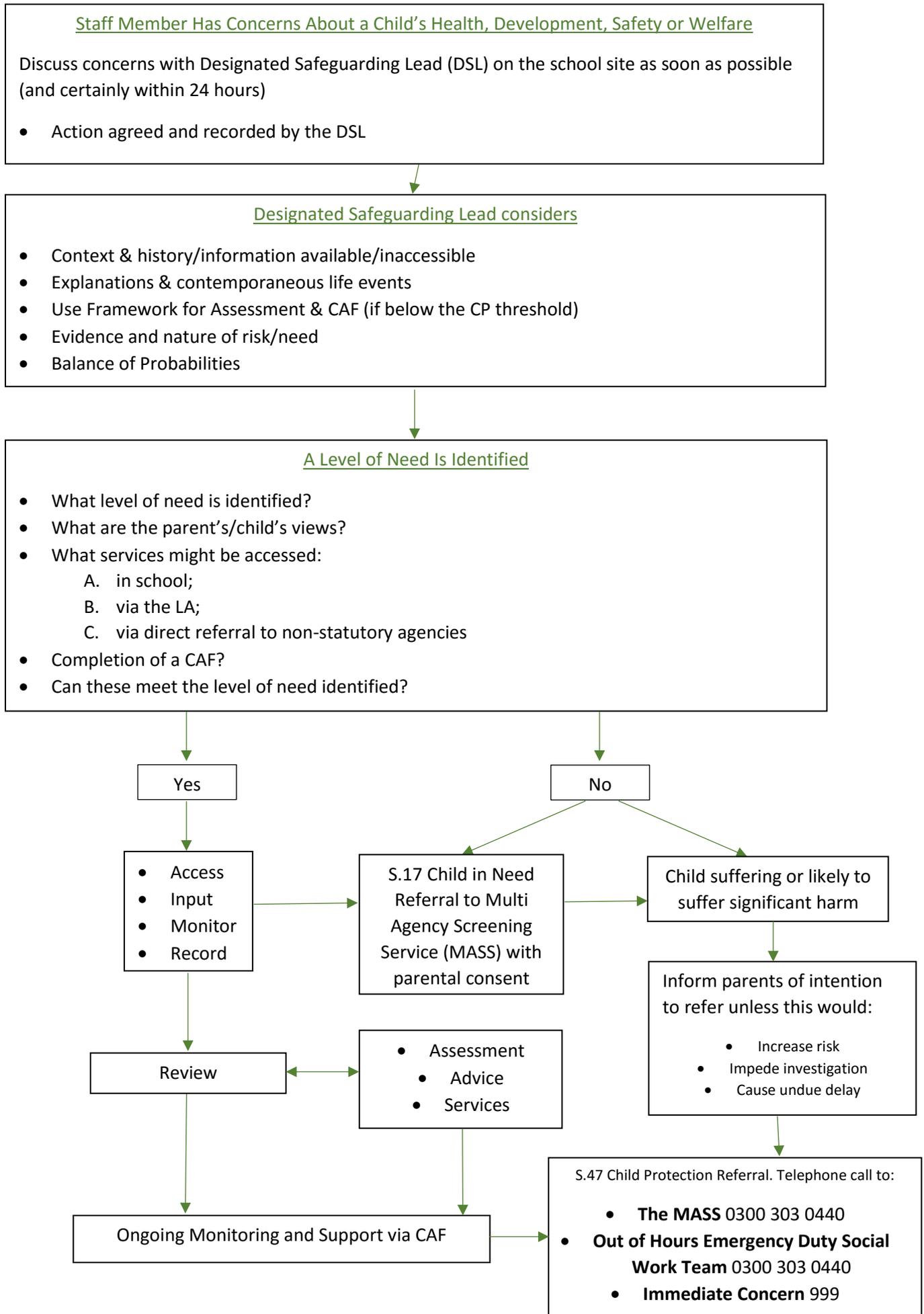
The MASS has 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent Child Protection referral, and where this places school / a child(ren) in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to the relevant Team Manager at MASS (0300 303 0440) or the Education Safeguarding Officer (01706 925384).

25. RISK ASSESSMENT 'CHECKLIST'

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the RBSCB definitions of abuse?
- Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
- I am wrongly attributing something to impairment?
- Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could/do impact upon the level of risk?
- Are any injuries or incidents acute, cumulative, episodic?
- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs, wishes and feelings?
- Parent's/carer's attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to cooperate?
- What does the child mean to the family?
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention?
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child (i.e. resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses?
- Possibilities?
- Probabilities?
- When and how is the child at risk?
- How imminent is any likely risk?
- How grave are the possible consequences?
- How safe is this child?
- What are the risk assessment options?
- What are the risk management options?
- What is the interim plan?

Wardle Academy Policy

APPENDIX 1: TAKING ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL



APPENDIX 2: TALKING AND LISTENING TO CHILDREN

If A Child Wants to Confide in You, You SHOULD:

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- Make sure that the child is ok;
- Make a careful record of what was said (see Recording).

You Should NEVER:

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children;
- Ask leading questions of children/young people
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Designated Safeguarding Lead).

Children with Communication Difficulties, Or Who Use Alternative/Augmentative Communication Systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- Opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).

Recordings Should:

- State who was present, (use full names and full job designations) time, date and place;
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the DSL or Head Teacher immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

What Information Do You Need to Obtain?

- Schools have no investigative role in Child Protection (Police and Children's Social Care will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses – leave this to them!);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and share information;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of who, what, where and when;

- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is ‘might this be a Child Protection matter?’
- If the answer is yes, or if you’re not sure, record and pass on immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead /Head Teacher/line manager.

If You Do Need to Ask Questions, What Is and Isn't OK?

- Never asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- Never make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc. e.g. Top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only ‘minimal prompts’ such as ‘go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that’
- Timescales are very important: ‘When was the last time this happened?’ is an important question.

What Else Should We Think About in Relation to Disclosure?

- Is there a place in school which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc.;
- We need to think carefully about our own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- Be prepared to answer the ‘what happens next’ question;
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we ‘know that [child.....] tells lies’;
- Think about how you might react if a child DID approach you in school. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity;
- Think about what support you could access if faced with this kind of situation in school.

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