



North Tyneside Council

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 North Tyneside Council's Employment & Skills Service (NTC E&S) follows the procedures set out in the interagency procedures produced by the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnerships (NTSCP) and North Tyneside Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB).

<https://www.northtynesidescp.org.uk/>

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1033/safeguarding-adults>

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/488/are-you-worried-about-child>

North Tyneside Council is strongly committed to practices and policies that protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, significant harm, radicalisation and extremism. This protocol recognises and accepts our role and responsibility in ensuring the safeguarding of our learners as required by Ofsted and relevant funding bodies, the Children Act 1989 the Care Act 2014, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2019), Ofsted Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (June 2021) and Working together to safeguard children (2019) statutory guidance. For forms of abuse and key terms see appendix 1.

NTC E&S also recognises that it has a responsibility to protect staff from unfounded allegations of abuse and threats.

1.2 Definitions

For the purpose of this protocol children are defined in the Children Act of 1989 as a person under the age of 18 years.

The Care Act 2014 defines an adult at risk as a person aged 18 and over and;

Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)

Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
and

As a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The definition of safeguarding children is:

protecting children from maltreatment

preventing impairment of children's health or development

ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Prevent Agenda

Extremism is defined in the Prevent Strategy 2011 as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

The Terrorism Act 2000 defines terrorism as an act that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people and/or damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system.

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

- 1.3** NTC E&S is committed to continuous improvement in safeguarding and Prevent and will adhere to North Tyneside Council and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requirements. NTC E&S will ensure/provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment wherever learning takes place, including work placements, apprenticeships and/or training delivered by a partner organisation on behalf of NTC E&S.

Safeguarding and Prevent within Employment & Skills will be overseen by the Adult Learning and Employment & Skills Management group in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Prevent Task Group.

Learners and apprentices will receive training about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism as well as safeguarding and online safety when starting their learning during induction with their tutor/instructor and will include the procedure for reporting any incidents or concerns. Additional learning to widen understanding and awareness will be delivered throughout learner and apprenticeship programmes and as appropriate.

Learners and apprentices will receive a Learner Handbook which outlines how they can stay safe, e-safety, British Values and how to report concerns and complaints.

Learning environments will be risk assessed and control measures put in place to safeguard both learners and staff.

Notice boards will be visible throughout centres supporting learner's awareness of safeguarding, radicalisation and extremism, British Values and how to report a concern.

Learners organising their own placements will have a DBS and must request a copy of the organisations safeguarding policy and share this with the tutor/assessor. DBS for apprentices will be applied for following recruitment by the employer. External placements and apprenticeship employers will undergo a risk assessment before the placement begins.

Apprenticeship employers will receive a handbook that identifies what to do if they have a safeguarding or Prevent concern.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 NTC E&S has trained Safeguarding and Prevent Officers who are accountable to the Head of Service and additional support from local safeguarding partners:

Belinda Payne - Programme Manager – Apprenticeships

Val Rooney-Tutor/Assessor Adult Learning/Domestic Violence Champion

Helen Samuel - Programme Manager - Connexions Service.

Lou Ross – Tutor/Assessor Ignite Programme

NTC Prevent Lead Lisa Harvey – Assistant Director of Disability and Mental Health

North East Safeguarding Co Ordinator Chris Sybenga

Gillian Dixon-Domestic Violence Champions

2.3 **It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Leads to:**

Offer support and guidance for safeguarding and Prevent concerns.

Offer support and guidance on MSET (Missing, Slavery, Exploitation, Trafficked) and referral pathways through MASH team

Keep a central record of all safeguarding and Prevent referrals and actions.

Write an annual report of all reported safeguarding Prevent concerns to share with E&S managers.

Record cases of domestic violence and sign post to Harbour where appropriate.

Support the training of staff on Prevent, Child Exploitation, British Values and Safeguarding

Liaise with the Health & Wellbeing group to support and safeguard staff and learners

Support cases of sexual harassment and reporting process

Review new legislation and training to share with managers and their staff teams.

Undertake refresher training every 2 years and update skills through additional reading and research annually.

Liaise with local safeguarding and Prevent support networks and agencies

Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to refer allegations made against professionals in the workforce (including paid employees and volunteers).

Chair a half-termly Safeguarding Leads meeting to include a member of the Senior Lead Team

Matters arising from Safeguarding Leads meetings will be reported on at Adult Learning Managers meetings.

Strategic matters arising are reported to E & S managers meeting via standing agenda item then actioned or cascaded as needed

Allegations, significant issues or urgent matters will be referred to Senior Lead team in parallel to the appropriate safeguarding/prevent procedure.

The DSL will escalate significant issues to Assistant Director of Education, Director of Education and Cabinet Member.

2.4 It is the responsibility of all staff and tutors to:

Ensure all learners are made aware of safeguarding, bullying and sexual harassment, radicalisation and extremism (Prevent) and E-Safety policies, protocols, procedures and guidelines during induction.

Distribute the Learner Handbook/E-Safety Guide and Acceptable Usage Policy at their discretion where learners are required to access online resources. The learners' and apprentices' signature is required on the induction checklist and as part of the e portfolio induction to indicate they have received and understood it.

Integrate personal development, Safeguarding, British Values and PREVENT into teaching, schemes of work and lesson plans.

Plan and embed PHSE where appropriate and ensure additional pastoral care awareness is part of all curriculum plans.

Carry out visual checks of teaching spaces before the commencement of the session.

Ensure registers are completed at the beginning of a class and if an apprentice or learner is missing note accordingly and make contact as soon as possible to ensure they are safe. If they cannot make contact, they should refer the concern to a manager.

Inform a Safeguarding/Prevent Officer if any concerns are raised or identified, or report directly to Front Door or the Police if urgent. (See appendix 2).

Refer any concerns about a colleague or volunteer directly to the DSL

Embed E-safety training during induction and on programme. Ensure learners are aware of e safety reporting procedures and protocol for accessing online material during sessions. (link to e safety policy)

Use only NTC E&S issued equipment to contact learners and apprentices.

Keep themselves, apprentices and learners safe and understand the following:

Respect and Consideration procedure

Disciplinary Procedure (learners and NTC employers)

PREVENT agenda.

E Safety Policy

Live Lesson Protocol

Adhere to the NTC Code of Practice

No staff member or volunteer should transport apprentices and learners in their own vehicles unless after consultation with manager it is agreed in exceptional circumstances i.e. illness to do so with another adult in the vehicle and the owner of the vehicle has Business Class car insurance.

Staff/volunteers should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and radicalisation and extremism so that they are able to identify cases of young people and adults at risk who may be in need of help or protection

All staff/volunteers should know what to do if a young person or adult at risk including apprentices tells them they are being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's / adult's social care. Staff should never promise a young person or adult that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child / adult.

All staff/volunteers should attend safeguarding and Prevent training annually as part of their CPD plans and a training log will be kept centrally.

All staff/volunteers will reapply for DBS every 3 years.

PM team meetings or curriculum support cascade key discussion points from DSL meeting to all staff during regular team meetings through safeguarding and Prevent standard agenda item.

Share details of the NSPCC Helpline for clients/learners to report Abuse in Education.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2021/april/sexual-abuse-in-education-helpline-launched>

2.5

It is the responsibility of Programme Managers to ensure:

Tutors are inducted into their role and all policies and protocols including safeguarding and PREVENT are shared.

Tutors undertake training on safeguarding issues and PREVENT and have the necessary information/documentation on the safeguarding protocol. This is tracked to ensure training is up to date.

All tutors to have access to all interdependent policies.

Check all safeguarding/Prevent is being adhered to during the quality assurance processes of the service.

Ensure employers/placement providers receive information and contact details on how to refer concerns and how to spot issues.

Ensure that Safeguarding and Prevent is on agendas for all meetings.

Ensure all staff/volunteers are aware of the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.

2.6

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team to ensure:

Provide representation during regular DSL meetings.

Review and oversee significant issues reported via the DSL

Positively promote the Prevent agenda and British Values through service improvement planning and performance management.

Share concerns and risks with the SLT and through governance processes.

3. Arrangements

3.1 Risk Assessment

- 3.1.1 NTC E&S will ensure that all venues used by apprentices and learners have a current premises risk assessment / venue audit report that addresses safeguarding. If none is available, NTC E&S will carry out an independent premises risk assessment in conjunction with corporate health and safety.
- 3.1.2 NTC E&S will ensure that all learning activities are risk assessed annually and control measures put in place to minimise risk for young people: women of child bearing age: expectant mothers or other vulnerable groups (as required by Regulation 19 of the Management of Health Safety and Welfare Regulations 1999).
- 3.1.3 NTC E&S will use the corporate risk assessment form based on the Council model and approved by Health and Safety Advisors.
- 3.1.4 Where NTC E&S are providing services for schools and within schools for learners aged 14-19 or learners on Family Learning programmes, the relevant school's protocols will be used for risk assessments.

3.2 Incidents

- 3.2.1** All incidents involving apprentices, learners, employees or visitors to NTC E&S venues must be reported immediately using the appropriate protocol. (See appendix 1). Exceptions are:
- Where learning is taking place on premises other than NTC E&S premises, the tutor will be responsible for reporting incidents relating to apprentices and learners only.
- Where NTC E&S are providing services within schools for learners aged 14-19 or learners on Family Learning programmes, the relevant school/work placement provider protocols should be used.
- 3.2.2** If an incident occurs on a learner's work experience placement or apprenticeship work place the learner/apprentice will be removed immediately until an investigation has taken place.
- 3.2.3** All concerns regarding radicalisation and extremism (Prevent) will be referred using the National Prevent referral form to the NTC Safeguarding Team as outlined in appendix 1.
- 3.2.4** All ICT access is monitored by Smoothwall technology. Any access identified as high risk will be tracked and referred to the management team within 24 hours for investigation and action. (see e-safety policy for process map)
- 3.2.5** Reports will be scrutinised at the DSL half termly meeting to review themes and implement plans for training or knowledge sharing.
- 3.2.6** All required search and screening activities will follow guidance from the Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance July 2022 and with support from the DSL.

4 Recruitment

- 4.1** NTC E&S has a rigorous recruitment process that complies with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 guidance and NTC Safer Recruitment policy which ensures all new members of staff are checked through DBS and have two references before being employed. References are scrutinised and checked to ensure there has been no previous concerns regarding safeguarding before employment commences. Checks are carried out to ensure they are suitably qualified and undergo an initial probationary period which will include a supportive quality processes.
- 4.2** Existing staff and volunteers undergo DBS checking every three years with details of these checks held in a central register. All records kept are managed within GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 guidelines.
- 4.3** All new recruits undergo an induction process which includes training on Prevent, Safeguarding and British Values. They receive all relevant policies and procedures for their information.

5 Reporting

5.1

Record Keeping

All concerns and discussions must be reported and recorded with decisions made and reasons for those decisions recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely.

- Records should be clear and comprehensive
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- Notes on action taken decisions reached and the outcome

5.2

Why is this important?

It is important that learners, apprentices and young people receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks and prevents risks escalating.

Examples of poor practice that impact on positive outcome include:

- Failing to act and refer early signs of abuse or neglect
- Poor record keeping
- Failing to listen to the views of the child
- Failing to re assess concerns when situations do not improve
- Not sharing information with the right people and between agencies
- Sharing information too slowly
- Lack of challenge to those who appear to be not taking action

6.0

Low Level Concerns

Introduction

Our service takes safeguarding very seriously. This includes ensuring that adults who work with young people do so in a way that is in accordance with the ethos and policies set out in our service, including the employee Code of Values and Behaviours.

This policy guidance sets out more detail:

- a) why we have a low level concerns policy in place in NTC Employment & Skills,
- b) why it is important,
- c) why employees are required to follow it, and
- d) gives guidance on the processes for employees to follow where they may have a view/ belief that a colleague's behaviour or practice or they act in such a way that is:
 - a. outside of our expectations for behaviour at work,
 - b. falls outside of professional standards,
 - c. is not in line with our school culture,
 - d. makes a colleague feel uncomfortable –

These are the areas that we deem to be and fall within a low-level concerns policy and in that instance we would require staff to raise concerns as noted later in this document. Concerns that may also relate to the member of staff themselves and may also include matters that may have occurred outside of the workplace.

More detail on what constitutes low level concerns and our expectations of staff, are included in our Code of values and behaviours booklet which all employees are expected to adhere to. To support understanding of our expectations we also provide training and guidance for staff on an annual basis at the beginning of the academic year, throughout the year as part of our CPD programme, in regular staff updates/ 121's, and during team meetings, in wider service briefings and as part of our induction.

The following provides information for staff on how we manage a low level concern in the service, how it relates to staff roles and expectations and notes how the service will record information provided and store that information overtime. However, if after reading this document either now or at a point of time in the future a member of staff has any queries or concerns or are not sure if something constitutes a low level concern, including something that could relate to you then please contact one of the Safeguarding Team or manager. In the event that you contact the safeguarding team please be aware they will raise the matter with the senior manager and dependent upon the matter being raised will either provide some additional support/ training/ clarity for you or raise the matter via the low-level concerns process or wider safeguarding policy and practice in the service.

This process complements our existing Safeguarding practice.

What is low level concern?

6.1

Keeping Children Safe in Education defines when matters including behaviour of employees or other adults in service may pose a risk of harm to a young person. In those instances, as an education service we need to raise matters with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and dependent upon what the matter is we then follow a process called Allegations Management which is noted in Section 4 of KCSE. In some instances, the matters /concerns that are raised with the LADO do not fall within the remit of KCSE but may be outside of expectations and standards of behaviour that are required by all of staff members to follow. In these instances the behaviour is where a member of staff behaves in a way that does not cause risk or harm to young people, but is, however, inappropriate; and where this takes place, we ensure that we deal with the matter either directly where the individual is a member of staff or a volunteer in our service. The outcome of our dealing with the matter may result in support or guidance or can result in some instances individuals no longer being employed at or working in our service.

KCSiE also defines what a low level concern is:

409	<p><i>What is a low level concern?</i></p> <p><i>The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at paragraph 338. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and</i> • <i>does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.</i>
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The key point in the above paragraph is that KCSE makes it really clear that we are required to raise concerns and to support us to be clear on/ understand this it says – *no matter how small, even if it's causing no more than a sense of unease (or a 'nagging*

doubt) where any adult working in the service may have acted in an way that it not in line with our expectations of all adults within NTC; and will be required to raise as a concern.

KCSE then goes on to give some examples of what inappropriate behaviour which is outside of our expectations may be, and it is imperative an employee raise those concerns immediately: The following is not an exhaustive list

410	<p><i>Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being over friendly with learners. • having favourites. • taking photographs of learners on their mobile phone. • <i>engaging with a child/learner on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,</i> • <i>using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.</i>
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411	<p><i>Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.</i></p>
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KCSE notes that irrespective of what has taken place and irrespective of what the actual outcome may be/is, it remains imperative that all staff are aware of the need to raise any concerns; remember safeguarding and child protection are key policy and practices that we all follow and this shared responsibility also transfers into low level concerns, so that any behaviour that are uncomfortable from another adult in the service, be this a colleague, a volunteer, an agency worker, etc it's imperative that these matters are raised so they can be looked into and managed:

412.	<p><i>It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (see Part Four - Section one), are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.</i></p>
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6.2

Clarity around Appropriate Behaviour vs Low Level Concern vs Allegation

Our Code of Conduct provides additional clarification on what our expectations of appropriate behaviour. KCSE provides the following clarification so that all individuals are able to clearly understand the difference between appropriate behaviour and low level concerns.

The following provides are the definitions included in KCSE and which we expect all employees in our service to understand:

Appropriate conduct	Behaviour which is entirely consistent with the organisation's code of conduct, professional standards, and the law.
Low level concern	Does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adult's behaviour towards a child does not meet threshold set out above.

	<p>A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a way that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is inconsistent with an organisation’s staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and • does not meet the allegation threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO but may merit consulting with and seeking advice from the LADO, and on a no-names basis if necessary.
Allegation	<p>Behaviour which indicates that an adult who works with young people has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, or may have harmed a child/young person; and/or • possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person; and/or • behaved towards a child/young person in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children/young person; and/or • behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children/young people. <p>This will be reported to the LADO and the head teacher will follow the appropriate process outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document for managing allegations against staff, and also seeking advice from their HR representative.</p>

If you are unclear on any of the above and how it applies to your role, or just wish to have a conversation about low level concerns and what it means for you then please contact your Safeguarding Team who will be able to provide you with some additional guidance, assistance and assurance.

6.3 **Storage, use and follow-up low-level concerns information**

Low Level Concerns (LLC) information will be recorded and held. We confirm that any information we hold will:

- a) be stored securely within our safeguarding systems,
- b) have access only by appropriate members of the leadership team, and
- c) be stored in accordance with our GDPR and data protection policy/practice.

Where a member of staff reports a concern(s) the information will be held confidentially and will not be shared with others apart from the senior manager for the service or those who need to be aware in the senior leadership team. The investigation of the low-level concern in accordance with KCSE will be managed by the senior manager and will follow a set process (see below). A report form (Appendix A) is available for completion.

Low-level concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in more formal action being taken including disciplinary procedures.

In terms of data retention, information is not stored in personal files but will be stored in our central safeguarding system for the duration of an individual's employment. Where an individual leaves our employment, any record of low-level concerns which are stored about them will be reviewed as to whether or not that information needs to be retained. In looking at data retention consideration will be given to:

- (a) whether some or all of the information contained within any record may have any reasonable likely value in terms of any potential historic employment or abuse claim so as to justify keeping it, in line with normal safeguarding records practice; or
- (b) if any record is not considered to have any reasonable likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly.

Linked Policies;

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Sexual Harassment and Abuse Policy

E Safety Policy

Live lesson Protocol

Prevent Risk Assessment & Action Plan

NTC Whistle Blowing Policy

Comments, Compliments & Complaints Policy

External Speaker & Events Policy

Freedom of Speech Policy

British Values Policy

Safer Recruitment Policy

Equality & Diversity Policy

Respect and Consideration Policy

NTC Code of Values and Behaviours

Searching, Screening and Confiscation 2022 guidance

Policy is reviewed annually.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mark Barrett', written in a cursive style.

**Mark Barrett
Senior Manager
NTC Employment & Skills Service**

Appendix 1

Reference Document:

Key concepts, definitions and advice

All staff follow procedures which are consistent with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019)

Child Protection – is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity, which is undertaken, to protect specific children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

Children in need – Children who are defined as being 'in need', under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (section 17(10) of the Children Act 1989), plus those who are disabled. The critical factors to be taken into account when deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are what will happen to the child's health or development without services being provided, and the likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development. Local Authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need.

The concept of significant harm – Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies the compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of harm/abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, and the presence and degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements. Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child, and/or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the maltreatment. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in a family and in social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long term emotional, physical or sexual harm/abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case, it is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside the family's strengths and supports.

Children missing from education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of harm/abuse or neglect.

The Company must ensure that staff will follow the procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of harm/abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. It is essential that the Service ensures that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Vulnerability

Staff should consider children who may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and may require early help. Factors that can increase vulnerabilities can include any children with additional needs including;

- Children with Special Educational Needs / Disabled children (SEND)
- Children facing housing issues such as frequent moves and homelessness
- Those living in families with chaotic lifestyles
- Families with increased stress, parental mental health and/or drug and alcohol dependency
- Children living elsewhere, with friends, relatives, are in care or are leaving care
- Asylum Seekers / Refugees
- Those vulnerable to discrimination on the basis of their sexuality, race, religion, ethnicity or disability
- Children at risk from neglect or abuse including specific issues such as FGM, CSE, forced marriage, radicalisation and living in households with domestic abuse
- Children with communication difficulties
- Children without adequate parenting / supervision which could lead to abuse, risk-related behaviour and sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list but merely an example of vulnerabilities that staff must consider when identifying safeguarding concerns.

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 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);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Abuse – 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. (KCSE 2022 Page 8, types of abuse or neglect).

Physical Harm/Abuse - A form of 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 Harm/Abuse - The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to 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 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or

in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: involves 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. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it, (see paragraph 49 of KCSiE part 1).

. Signs include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeated sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeated pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile phone
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile phone) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- 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
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people into exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress)
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime / police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines. Criminal networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for purposes of transporting drugs. A referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county line exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- can affect a vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be linked to gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. (KCSIE 2021)

Signs and Symptoms may include:

- persistently going missing from home or school
- being found out of area
- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phone
- excessive receipt of calls and text messages
- relationships with older controlling individuals
- associated with gangs
- leaving home or care without explanation
- suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries
- parental concerns
- significant decline in school performance
- significant changes in emotional wellbeing

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM. What is FGM? It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 types of procedure:

- Clitoridectomy: partial/total removal of clitoris
- Excision: partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
- Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
- All other procedures that may include; pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour'
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic

- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK. All staff must speak to DSL as there is a legal duty on teachers. Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as 27 non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks 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 change 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 infection
- Disclosure

The 'One Chance' rule:

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges take action without delay. As KCSIE now states: 'Under section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by sect 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those falling to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions'

Further information: www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-onfemale-genital-mutilation

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including:

- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Breast ironing

Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered in to without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter in to the marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. (KCSIE 2021)

Signs and symptoms may include:

- Students may appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem. They may have mental health disorders and display behaviours such as self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia
- Sometimes they may come to the attention of the police having been discovered shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol
- Often students' symptoms can be exacerbated in the periods leading up to the holiday season.
- Students may present with a sudden decline in their performance aspirations or motivation
- They may be subject to excessive restrictions and control at home.
- Some students may not be allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after-school activities
Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college, and even during lunch breaks.
- Some students may stop attending school or college
- Their homework is incomplete or appears rushed. This may be the result of being actively discouraged from doing it by family members.
- Students may do their homework late at night, which frequently shows in school because they are lethargic, unable to concentrate and have a general appearance of tiredness. Professionals being told that the student is out of the country.
- There are occasions when older siblings (usually brothers) and cousins keep a close eye on girls to make sure that they do not meet anyone or talk to friends.
- Conflict between the student and their parents about whether the student will be allowed to continue their education
- Family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

Sexting

- Exchange of self-generated explicit images, through mobile picture messages, webcams or over the internet.

Radicalisation

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 was published on 12th March 2015. Section 26 of the Act places a duty on schools in England (and Wales) to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This duty applies to all schools, whether publicly-funded or independent, and organisations covered by the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

Duties on schools include:

- Effective partnership working with other local agencies, e.g. Safeguarding Partners (former LSCB) police, health, etc.
- Information sharing
- Maintaining appropriate records
- Assessing local risk of extremism (including Far Right extremism)
- Demonstrating they are protecting children
- Developing clear protocols for visiting speakers
- Safeguarding policies that take account of Local Safeguarding Partners' policies and procedures

- Training staff to give them knowledge and confidence
- Ensuring there is robust ICT protocols that filter out extremist materials
- School buildings must not be used to give a platform to extremists

Understanding and recognising risks and vulnerabilities of radicalisation

Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These may include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause Significant Harm.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that staff exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified. Possible indicators include:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession of violent extremist literature
- Behavioural changes

Advocating violent actions and means;

- Association with known extremists
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology

Further information: www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

Trafficking and modern slavery

- People are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.
 - Someone is in slavery if they are forced to work through coercion, or mental or physical threat; owned or controlled by an 'employer', through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse; dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property';
 - They are physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.
- Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Guidance. Modern Slavery: how to identify and support victims- GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Online Safety/Cyber crime

- Children and young people need to be supported and guided in order to use the internet safely and to be also given the opportunity to learn to behave appropriately online.

Peer on Peer abuse and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, 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 typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation).

Please read page 34 to 37 in Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 2021 for a fuller description.

Incel-involuntary celibates

- Inceldom is classified within a government category known as “mixed, unstable and unclear” ideologies.
- This category accounts for more than half of all referrals to counter terrorism Prevent programme in 2021/20.
- Incels are typically heterosexual males who wish to but do not have sexual relationships with women.
- Incels typically blame their lack of sexual/romantic relationships on societal structures, women and the men women do have relationships with. This blame leads to self definitions as victims.
- Incel communities may be growing due to online access. Young vulnerable people spending more time online taking part in forums.

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

**Appendix 2
 Low Level Concern Report Form
 (Please seek guidance from your DSL)**

Date and time of incident:	
Name of employee:	
Manager reported to:	
DSL: reported to:	
Witnessed by:	
Any other witness(s):	
Location/room:	
Has the incident been reported to Senior Manager for further investigation?	Yes/No
Describe the incident (what happened):	
What initial actions did you take?	
Signed:	Date:
Actions	Dates
How was the incident resolved – what further action was taken?	
Was the incident escalated to LADDO?	Yes/No Date:
Actions to follow up?	
This form will be saved by the DSL in Accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and the Low Level Concern policy in accordance with GDPR and Data Protection guidelines	



North Tyneside Council

Staff Guidance on Reporting Safeguarding/Prevent/Low level Concerns/Domestic Violence

