



Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Local Governing Body

Last review date		Aut	2025
Next review date		Aut	2026
Signed		Name	P.Reece
Position	Headteacher	Date	30.09.25
Governor ratification			
Signed		Name	J.Sebastian
Position	CofG	Date	30.09.25

The school recognises its obligation under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 to promote and safeguard the welfare of all its pupils and sees its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as fulfilling a key part of this duty. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School believe that all children, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, religion, culture, family circumstances, gender and ability, have the right to be protected. We believe that every child has the right to be happy, healthy and safe. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 "providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes".

This policy also links to the EYFS Framework (Section 3 'Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements').

Introduction

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding children.

There are three main elements to our policy:

1. Prevention through teaching, pastoral support and strong and authentic relationships with pupils and families.
2. Procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse. Because of our day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to identify and act upon signs and indications of abuse.
3. Support for pupils who may have been subject to abuse and working with families and additional agencies in order to address and prevent any safeguarding issues and achieve positive outcomes.

Our policy applies to everyone in school and is explained to them during induction and re-visited regularly. This applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school, community, education staff and governors. Learning assistants, mid-day supervisors, office staff, as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

Concerned parents, carers or members of the community may also contact school governors, the headteacher or deputy headteacher if they are concerned about a child. All staff are required to read, comply and sign that they have understood Part 1 (as well as Annex A) of the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

Please note that if you are ever concerned about the welfare of a child or family you must contact Social Care on 01744 6766767 or the out of hours number on 0345 050 0148

Helpful guidance can be found in the 'What To Do If a Child is being Abused' 2015

Our Mission Statement

At Brook Lodge we want MAGIC children!

This is children who are:

Motivated

Aspirational

Growing in

Independence and

Confidence

We strive to achieve this through:

Promoting and fostering positive relationships involving school, pupils and parents, the local community, national links and international links.

A challenging curriculum that is child led, ensuring the best start to a child's lifelong learning journey – building a firm foundation in the basic skills and creating positive experiences which will unlock every child's potential.

Recognising and celebrating a child's achievements on every step along their learning journey.

Removing any barriers to learning, providing equal opportunities in all we do.

A happy, healthy, safe and secure learning environment and learning experience.

Providing outstanding teaching throughout the curriculum and in all we offer.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is defined in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance (Sept 2025) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical 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

At Rainford Brook Lodge, we promote a culture of openness and accountability with safeguarding:

- We share and use information
- Elements of safeguarding are built into our curriculum
- We accept that safeguarding really is everyone's responsibility

Types and definitions of abuse,

To best safeguard our children, staff must know about abuse as it can take many different forms. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School staff receive training to understand the different forms of abuse and their signs and symptoms.

Definitions and examples of the different forms of abuse can be found in Appendix 1.

The four main categories of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

In relation to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025', Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School also recognise additional forms of abuse which children may be at risk of.

These include:

- Female Genital Mutilation or FGM
- Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Child on Child Abuse
- Children missing from home or care
- Child Missing in Education
- Children at risk from, or involved with serious violent crime including Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Sexual Exploitation or CSE
- Contextual safeguarding
- Domestic abuse (including violence, controlling and coercive behaviour)
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse and so-called honour-based violence
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender based violence/ violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental Health
- Modern Slavery
- Private Fostering
- Radicalisation and Extremism.
- Serious Violence
- Trafficking

Prevention

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School recognises high self-esteem, supportive friends and positive relationships with trusted adults' support, prevention and early intervention when it comes to safeguarding children.

The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensure children to know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty;
- Embed skills throughout school that help children to keep themselves safe. This includes throughout the curriculum, whole school initiatives and bespoke interventions/activities.
- Include in the curriculum, materials which will help children develop a realistic perspective and appropriate attitude to the responsibilities of adult life and the treatment of children.
- Teach specific safeguarding topics within the curriculum across all year groups. Here at Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, we recognise the significance of teaching children how to keep themselves safe. A comprehensive PSHE scheme is in place as well as specific issues dealt with through assemblies and lessons across the curriculum. This includes e-safety. Within PSHE, Relationships and Sexual Health is also taught at an age appropriate level (See RSE policy) and will be updated in line with any necessary changes in the [Relationships, Sex and Health Education Guidance](#) which was issued in July 2025. Education settings have a year to implement this guidance (i.e. by September 2026).



Procedures

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School follows the procedures set out by the St. Helens Safeguarding Children Board, which are available at <https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/scp>. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School strives to create a culture of vigilance within school. Therefore, we have clear internal procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues; these must be adopted and followed by all staff members and volunteers.

The school will:

1. Ensure it has two Designated Safeguarding Leads who are responsible for dealing with safeguarding issues within school. Both staff will have undertaken appropriate training courses to fulfil the role.
2. Recognise the key role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and arrange all necessary support and training.
3. Receive additional training in order to best support children and their families and achieve positive outcomes regardless of individual circumstances or challenges.
4. Ensure every member of staff and every governor know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy DSLs and their roles and that disclosures are reported directly to them to deal with. They are:

Mr Phil Reece –Headteacher (Designated Safeguarding Lead) – 01744 678816

Mrs Kathryn Hodkinson – Deputy Headteacher (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)
– 01744 678816

Emails can be made to brooklodge@emst.org.uk or
brooklodesafeguarding@emst.org.uk

The name of the Governor responsible for safeguarding is: Mrs Mills

All can be contacted through the school e.mills@emst.org.uk or by telephoning 01744 678816.

The role of the Governor responsible for safeguarding is to ensure that as a Governing body: -

- ensure that a DSL and Deputy DSL has been appointed;
- a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is in place (and reviewed annually)
- delegated responsibility for the implementation, awareness of, and ensuring of complicity with the above policy
- has undertaken appropriate training
- receives termly reports regarding Safeguarding
- will undertake periodic checks to ensure all safeguarding procedures are working effectively

5. Ensure that all members of staff and volunteers are aware of the need to be alert to signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to effectively respond to a child with immediate effect who makes a disclosure.

Staff complete an incident or concern on cPoms (where this is not available, a paper concerns sheet is available from the staffroom and can be scanned to cPoms later). A factual accurate account of the incident/concern and all additional information required in the boxes filled on cPoms (with additional details needed for paper copies eg date/time/names etc) should be completed. All concerns (including 'low level' concerns where there is an actual section for these on cPoms) are then immediately passed to the DSL who assesses the action to be taken.

At least annually, staff are issued with relevant policies and procedures and associated training relating to child protection and safeguarding. This policy (and other relevant supporting documents) are available to all staff at all times digitally

Ensure that parents and carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff to safeguard children in accordance with the following documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Dec 2023)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Children includes everyone under the age of 18

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals must make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they must consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024 Pg. 4

6. Provide refresher training for all staff every year and a Safeguarding Induction (including issuing the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy) for new staff and volunteers so that they know:
- i. their personal responsibilities,
 - ii. the local policy and procedures,
 - iii. the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse,
 - iv. the appropriate way to take action and support a child who makes a disclosure.
7. Notify the local Social Care team if:
- a) There are concerns regarding a child's welfare or safety
 - b) It must have to exclude a pupil on a Child Protection Plan or who has involvement with social care, either for a fixed term or permanently.
 - c) There is an unexplained absence of a pupil on a Child Protection Plan or who has involvement with social care.
 - d) Parents and carers will always be notified and their consent requested when a referral to social care is necessary. However, this may be overridden if it is deemed to put the child at further risk.

The above will be based on LSCB procedures and using the Continuum of Need as a basis for deciding on

levels of concern

8. Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core group meetings and child protection review conferences. This may also include information exchange where initial concerns are raised (with reference to 'Information Sharing' – DFE May 2024)
9. Keep electronic records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken) even when there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care (use of cPoms for this).
10. Ensure that current records are kept securely, with users required to have two-factor authentication to access them where there is access to all children (teachers have access to view their own class only). Teaching assistants can fill in but not view any records on cPoms. Archived files kept securely for 18 years within CPOMS portal.
11. Adhere to the procedures set out by the St. Helens Safeguarding Children Board and their Safeguarding Procedures when an allegation is made against a member of staff. All allegations will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Staff, parents, carers and members of the public may make a referral to the LADO on 01744 671252 or sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk.
12. Employ robust and secure safer recruitment procedures which are always mindful of protecting children from unsuitable people. Staff and governor trained in 'Safer Recruitment'.
13. Ensure that all our practice is child centred and puts the voice of the child first.
14. Seek guidance from the safeguarding Children In Education Advisor.
15. Seek guidance from the Trust Safeguarding staff
16. Seek guidance from the Governing Body.

Managing allegations against staff members

Any allegation against a member of staff will always be taken seriously and dealt with immediately. At Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, it is important to ensure that any allegation is thoroughly investigated in order to effectively ensure the safety of the child but also the staff member involved.

Any allegation against a member of staff must be reported to the Headteacher. The Headteacher and DSL will follow the Allegation Procedures of the LA adopted by the governing body. In the event of an allegation being made against the headteacher, staff must either report to the deputy headteacher or to the Chair of Governors (Mrs Jane Sebastian J.Sebastian@emst.org.uk).

It may be necessary to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for further advice. However, if it is evident that the allegation is true, or if we are advised by the LADO, then a LADO referral will be completed.

The St Helens LADO can be contacted on 01744 671252 or sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk

The Confidential Reporting/Whistleblowing Policy provides staff with an effective procedure for reporting concerns. The purpose of the policy is to:

- encourage employees to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice
- provide avenues for employees to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken

- ensure that employees receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied
- reassure employees that they will be protected from possible reprisals of victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith
- Ensure that in line with KCSIE 2025 part 4, staff are confident in raising 'Low Level Concerns' to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors if the concern relates to the Headteacher.

Further Whistleblowing advice can be found by using the NSPCC:

If you're a professional with concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in our school or another organisation, you can talk to the NSPCC anonymously:

NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285

The Whistleblowing Advice Line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

False or malicious allegations will be taken extremely seriously and will not be tolerated under any circumstance. If the allegation turns out to be malicious, it will down to the Headteacher's as to whether a sanction must be issues. The LADO will also be contacted so the child's details can be recorded within the Local Authority in order to protect staff. If an allegation is made against a member of staff, it does not mean that the staff member will automatically be suspended. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors or trustees where appropriate, will make decisions based on individual cases in conjunction with the LADO and HR from the Trust.

Involving the Police

Where there are concerns that a pupil has committed a crime within school it may be necessary to contact the police.

Where this might be the case then the DSL/Headteacher will make reference to guidance found at:

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

Roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- The DSL has lead responsibility for dealing with any safeguarding and child protection concerns at school. It is important that someone is available at all times to deal with any concerns or offer support or guidance to staff. This means that Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School has implemented safeguarding systems that are robust and allow an alternative appropriate member of staff such as the deputy DSL, or member of SLT, to deal with a child protection concern quickly and effectively in the DSL's absence.
- The DSL acts as a source of support, guidance and expertise when deciding how to deal with a child protection concern. This can include making a referral to an external agency, including Children's Social Care.

- The DSL receives additional training, including Level 3 training which qualifies them as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This needs to be updated a minimum of every two years. The DSL also receives additional training on a wide variety of safeguarding topics to ensure they are confidently able to deal with a vast array of issues at a professional level. The DSL will deliver (or facilitate delivery of) statutory Level 2 Safeguarding Training to all staff and long-term volunteers or students on an annual basis. The school holds a CPD record of safeguarding and child protection training. For short term volunteers and members of staff, such as supply teachers, the visitors' leaflet will be issued which covers safeguarding systems.
- The DSL, along with all staff, will be able to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse. However, it will be the DSL's responsibility to make an appropriate judgement on what action to take. This will be based on the concern raised and the DSL will always make decisions in collaboration with the deputy DSL or a member of the SLT.
- The DSL will make the decision of when to offer families support and at what level. The Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT) can gather lots of information to support children and their families but requires parental consent.
- The DSL will attend regular training and network events and keep up to date with statutory guidance and changes in legislation.
- The DSL is responsible for writing and reviewing the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and ensuring it contains relevant and up to date information. All staff and parents/carers of children who attend Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School have a responsibility to read and adhere to the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The DSL is responsible for creating and maintaining written and digital records of child protection and safeguarding concerns. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School adheres to GDPR data protection rules and regulations; this means that individual safeguarding files will be stored and retained securely, for 18 years. However, please note, we will share information with other professionals if this is deemed to be necessary and in the best interest of the child's safety. This includes requests for information from other services such as the police or Children's Social Care. All individual safeguarding files must create an accurate and factual picture of a child and must be a tool in preventing any safeguarding concerns from escalating.
- The DSL will either complete or contribute to a trust S147 Audit. This is a self-assessment tool which is used to ensure that school's safeguarding procedures are robust and effective. The DSL will also complete internal Trust Audits with DSLs from the other schools in the trust in all of the schools
- The DSL is aware of the St. Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership (SHSCP) and how it operates. The DSL will also attend regular training provided by SHSCP.
- The DSL will attend multi-agency meetings and provide concise and accurate written reports stating the school's perspective and professional opinion on the situation. The DSL will work with class teachers and other relevant members of staff in order to comprise an accurate and factual report. The DSL will also seek to obtain

the wishes and feelings of the child or young person so their views are incorporated and shape the report. The DSL will attend Child Protection Conferences and will be responsible for contributing to the decision as to whether a child must be subject to a child protection plan.

- The DSL will provide written reports and contributions to external agency assessments. This can include Child and Family Assessments (social care), CAMHS assessments and Family Action Meetings (this is not an exhaustive list). Again, if sharing information is deemed to be necessary in order to ensure the safety or protection of a child, then the DSL will provide a report to the relevant agency. Parents or carers consent will be sought in most cases however there may be occasions where this is not appropriate or may compromise the safety of the child.
- The DSL monitors attendance and checks on the welfare of children who are not in school. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is directly linked to and supports the school's attendance policy.
- The DSL ensures that Safeguarding/Child Protection concerns/issues are always an item on both the staff briefing and SLT agendas which take place weekly and that information is shared with the relevant staff.
- Between staff and the DSL, information about vulnerable children's academic progress and attainment must be known and all staff must have high aspirations for these children and the DSL must support staff to overcome challenges. This is especially important for children with social workers.

Roles and responsibilities of the Deputy Safeguarding Lead:

- The Deputy DSL is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns in the absence of the DSL.
- The Deputy DSL is a strategic part in the development and implementation of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The Deputy DSL also receives additional training, including the Level 3 training which qualifies them as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Early Help

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School recognises that early intervention can have a positive impact for our families and can prevent children from significant harm. We also recognise that as a school we are in a strong position to support our children and families, due to the frequency of contact we have with them as well as our strong working relationships. Therefore, we promote an Early Help Offer which is a graduated structure aimed at providing support at the appropriate and earliest level. This is in accordance with St. Helens Borough Council's Family Support Model.

All school and college staff must be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 Pg. 8

Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

The four levels of need are:

Level 1 – Universal: Children and young people, including those with needs, whose needs are met by family, community and universally provided services.

Level 2 – Early Help: Children may have low levels of need or be susceptible to poor outcomes and would benefit from additional support and services to help them overcome difficulties. At this level, professionals may offer single agency support or complete an EHAT assessment, taking account of the whole family's needs and strengths. 2024 will see the introduction of the new streamlined EHAT assessment. The changes have scaled down the length of the document making it more succinct and quicker to complete whilst ensuring we capture the necessary information to inform an effective plan.

Level 3 – Child in Need: Children have a higher or more complex level of need requiring a multi-agency response, offering targeted support to improve outcomes. Children at this level meet the legal level (threshold) for a Child in Need assessment (Section 17) and should be referred to Contact Cares using a service request form to: adultandchildrenteam@sthelens.gov.uk.

The Contact Cares Team should only be alerted via phone calls if concerns relate to level 4.

Level 4 – Child Protection: Children or young people who are experiencing very serious or complex needs, that are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm. Their needs will be such that they require intensive support from specialist services. Children at this level meet the statutory level for Child Protection (Section 47 (1)) and should be referred to Contact Cares, telephone number 01744 676767, The Emergency Duty Team operates outside normal office hours (Monday to Thursday 5pm to 9am, Friday 4.30pm to 9am, and weekends & bank holidays 9am to 9am) and can be contacted on 0345 050 0148

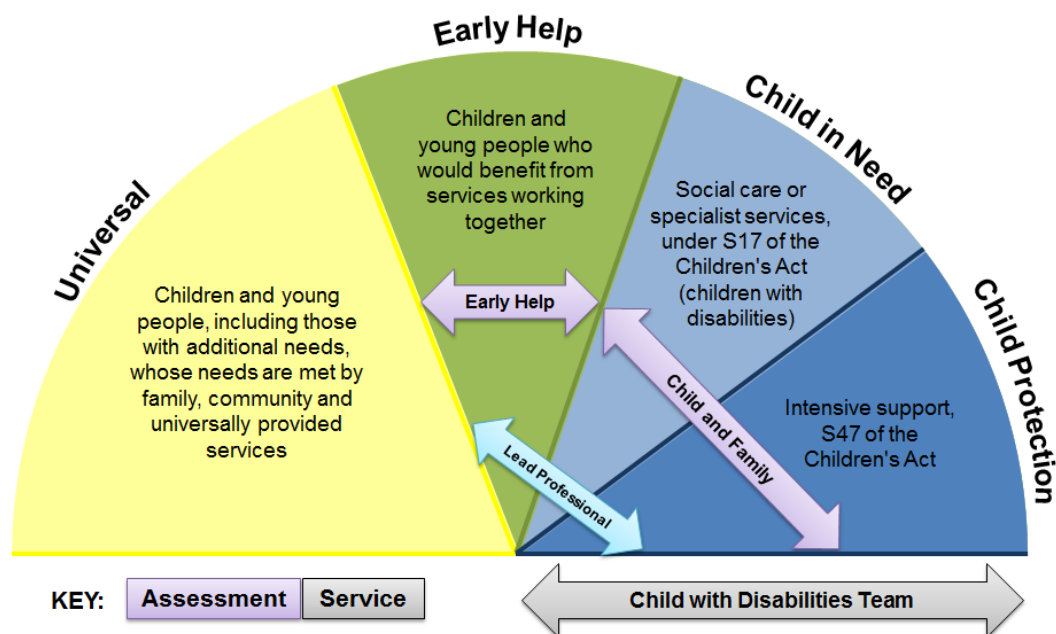


Table: Description of the four levels of need

Level 1: Universal

Definition	- Children and young people, including those with additional needs, whose needs are met by family, community and universally provided services. - Universal services have long(er) term involvement with majority of children and families and play a key role in helping them throughout stages of life. Universal services are best placed to help and support children and families to resolve need at this level. - All services should help support children and families to find their own solutions. - Sometimes children and families need more structured and focused help, for example, when they are going through challenging times. One professional may be able to provide the extra help that is needed or help the family to identify where to access the right help.
Example	- Children and young people, who reach their full potential, make good overall progress through the care of their families, communities and the support of a range of universally provided services; this could include welfare rights, debt management, health issues or behaviour management strategies in the home. - For instance a school nurse or learning mentor is encouraged to offer support where they can, and where formal assessment and planning is not required.
Process	- Each agency uses its own processes and documentation. - This is to include a plan that is co-developed with families and monitored to see if the plan has been implemented and agreed outcomes have been achieved and, if not, what the next steps are. - The New 2024 Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT) checklist is available to support the consideration of information available and the agreed plan. - All schools should have a graduated approach to identifying and responding to special educational need, one of the first responses should be high quality teaching (3). - Family Hubs are available in St Helens to offer support to children, young people and their families. They provide a single place to go for support and information from a variety of services. Family hubs make it easier for families to get the support they need
Consent	- Each agency will have its own process for gaining and documenting consent. - Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 states that everyone has the right to respect for his or her private and family life, home and correspondence. Workers who have access to information about children and families must therefore treat any information as confidential. - When an individual agency identifies needs that cannot be met by their service alone, consent to refer to an appropriate service should be obtained from parents or carers. - Advice should be sought from your safeguarding lead or line manager if the child's main carer does not hold parental responsibility.
Lead professional	Not required.
Definitions used by other services	Example from 0-19: Universal services from the health visitor and school nurse ensure that families can access the healthy child programme, are supported at key times and have access to a range of community services (4)
Information sharing	It is important to keep accurate and reliable records so that if required, information can be shared appropriately and lawfully (providing there is the appropriate consent).

Level 2: Early Help

Definition	- Children may have low levels of need or may be vulnerable to poor outcomes and require additional support and services to help them overcome any difficulties. Early Help can also prevent problems arising. - Effective Early Help relies upon local agencies working together to: identify children, unborn babies included, and families who would benefit from Early Help; undertake an assessment of the need for Early Help; and provide targeted Early Help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.
------------	--

	Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help is working together to provide support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the unborn through to the teenage years.
Example	- There may be concern about a number of risk factors or one specific risk factor. - The family either require additional support over and above universal services (level 1) or may have improved and no longer be at level 3 or 4. - The level (threshold) for statutory social care intervention is not currently met.
Process	- Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency cooperation to improve the welfare of children. - The procedure to be followed is the St Helens Multi Agency Early Help Standards and Criteria for Expected Standards (5). This procedure should be utilised for families whereby: a) an agency or family identify a need and these needs can be met by a single agency working with the family / family network and a formal assessment is not required. b) an agency or family identify the need for support and assessment would support an increased understanding of the presenting needs and strengths. The agency and family agree/consent to an EHAT assessment being progressed or another form of holistic assessment. c) MASH recommend Early Help d) The family step down from Children's Social Care e) The family step up / step down from Level 2 Early Help - The assessment and recording are supported by the Early Help Assessment Tool. - Additional support for the plan can be gained via TESSA and the Level 2 Panel (5). - Consider targeted interventions as part of the graduated response to SEND (3), additional funding may be required. Learners necessitating long term interventions with personalised learning may require an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan - Family Hubs are available in St Helens to offer support to children, young people and their families. They provide a single place to go for support and information from a variety of services. Family hubs make it easier for families to get the support they need
Consent	- The consent of parents and young people of sufficient age and understanding is therefore required for agencies to share information or to hold a Family Action Meeting. - Agencies should obtain informed consent to start the Early Help Assessment and begin to coordinate a plan of support. - Advice should be sought from your safeguarding lead or line manager if the child's main carer does not hold parental responsibility. - The St Helens Multi Agency Consent Form should be used to record consent to information sharing. The consent statement on the Early Help Assessment Tool system should be updated to include all agencies that are supporting the family. Where appropriate agencies own agreed consent form should be completed. - Unless there are very exceptional circumstances, meetings should not take place without the consent of parents and children of sufficient age and understanding. See the Think Family procedure (5).
Lead professional	- A lead professional is identified from amongst the group of practitioners working with the unborn, child, young person or family. The lead professional is chosen through a process of discussion and agreement between those practitioners who are involved and in consultation with the family. - If the case is referred to the Level 2 Panel and assigned a Family Intervention Worker, the lead professional will be informed of the outcome of panel and the recommended plan. The lead professional and allocated Family Intervention Worker should meet within 5 working days to agree the plan of work.
Definitions used by local services	Example from the Youth Justice Prevention Service: providing intervention to young people and their families who are identified at early onset of risk of offending or displaying antisocial behaviour in the community.
Information sharing	Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is for effective identification, assessment and service provision (see page 18 in Working Together (1)). Participants attending the Family Action Meeting will share information documented within their report and relevant to the dimensions and domains of the Assessment Framework outlined in the Early Help Assessment Tool.

Level 3: Child in Need	
Definition	- Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (Child in Need). - Children have a higher or more complex level of need requiring a multi-agency response offering targeted support to improve outcomes. - A Child in Need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.
Example	- Children in Need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, in relation to their special educational needs, disabilities, as a carer, or because they have committed a crime. - Where concerns escalate beyond Early Help, and a child's level of development/welfare is compromised, the concern can be 'stepped up' for social care interventions where appropriate. - Similarly, where there have been social care interventions, and needs have been addressed, it can be 'stepped down' the levels to ensure continuation of support that is appropriately provided through multi-agency arrangements, which should prevent re-escalation at a later stage.
Process	- Child in Need (CiN). Referrals are made using the Service Request Form which is sent to the Contact Centre on adultandchildrenteam@sthelens.gov.uk. Parents/carers consent needs to be sought before completing this. Once the service request form is received, screening is completed by the MASH Team and a decision is made as to whether to progress to the Duty Teams/Lead Practitioner for a Children and Families Assessment (C&F / Single Assessment). For an example of what makes a good referral click here. - Consider targeted interventions as part of the graduated response to SEND, additional funding may be required. Learners necessitating long term interventions with personalised learning may require an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan (3) and/or a Care, Education and Treatment Review (CETR) which are for those children and young people with learning difficulties and or autism who have been or may be admitted to a specialist mental health / learning disability hospital (6).
Consent	- The informed consent of parents and young people of sufficient age and understanding is required for agencies to share information or to hold a multi-agency meeting. - Unless there are very exceptional circumstances, meetings should not take place without the consent of parents and children of sufficient age and understanding. On the occasion that meetings do take place it is essential feedback is provided to the family involved. - If parents or young people choose not to consent it may raise questions as to why. If parents or young people are worried or not sure, they should be encouraged to speak to the professional(s) working with them about their concerns. For further guidance see Working Together (1). - Advice should be sought from your safeguarding lead or line manager if the child's main carer does not hold parental responsibility. - The Multi Agency Consent Form should be used to record informed consent to information sharing and a service Request Form should be completed.
Lead professional	The assessment is completed by the lead professional who can be a social worker or one of the other services/agencies working closely with the family.
Definitions used by others	The same statutory (legal) definition is used by all services.
Information sharing	- The same as for Early Help - Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is for identification, assessment and service provision. Meeting participants will share information documented within their report for a Child in Need Meeting and relevant to the dimensions and domains of the Assessment Framework.

Level 4: Child Protection	
Definition	- The Children Act 1989 introduced significant harm as the level which justifies compulsory intervention in family life and the best interests of the children. - Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm'. - Children or young people who are experiencing very serious or complex needs that are having a major impact on their achievement of expected outcomes. Their needs will be such that they require intensive support from specialist services. - Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse.
Example	- Concerns about maltreatment may be the reason for a referral to local authority Children's Social Care or may be detected during the course of providing social work services to the child and family. - Cases of physical, sexual or emotional harm or where the child/children are experiencing neglect or have been the perpetrator or victim of a serious crime.
Process	- Referral is made to Contact Cares; telephone number 01744 676767 during office hours (EDT out of hours 0345 050 0148). Screening is completed by the MASH Team. The case information is sent to statutory services for a Strategy Meeting to determine if Section 47 level is met. - If the case is already open at Level 3, escalation is via internal processes. - The Children and Families Assessment (C&F / Single Assessment) is completed by a social worker.
Consent	- Where possible, informed consent should always be gained from the parent unless informing the parent or person with parental responsibility would put the child or young person at further risk. - Advice should be sought from your safeguarding lead or line manager if the child's main carer does not hold parental responsibility.
Lead professional	A social worker will be the lead professional.
Definitions used by other services	The same statutory definition is used by all services. Other useful definitions: - Section 20: Some children may require accommodation because there is no one who has parental responsibility for them, because they are lost or abandoned or because the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care. Under section 20 of the Children Act, the local authority has a duty to accommodate such children in their area (1). Children remanded (pre-sentencing) to a Youth Detention Centre automatically come under section 20 until or unless sentenced to custody. The Social Worker and Youth Justice Worker work collaboratively to schedule reviews (1). - Section 31: where a child is in the care of the local authority, the local authority, as a corporate parent, must assess the child's needs and draw up a care plan which sets out the services which will be provided to meet the child's identified needs (1).

Supporting the pupil at-risk

We recognise that children who are subject to abuse in

whatever form may experience a significant effect of their social and emotional wellbeing as well as their academic attainment.

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School recognises that school is a stable and secure environment in the lives of our pupils. Therefore we strive to create a safe and consistent environment.

In accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, we recognise that some children may be considered more vulnerable than others.

These include:

- A disabled child and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs
- A young carer
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence, and/or
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect

Children with additional learning difficulties or disabilities can face additional barriers with regards to recognition of abuse. These barriers can include:

Barrier	Resolution / Additional Support
Communication Difficulties It can be significantly more challenging and unlikely for a child to disclose abuse if they have difficulties with communication.	Speech and language interventions Utilising key members of staff who have good understanding and relationships of that pupil Alternative communication means such as sign language, Makaton, PECs etc.
Behavioural Difficulties Screaming, shouting, emotional distress, marks being ignored, overlooked or failure to investigate if this is considered to be 'regular behaviour for the child'.	Ensure that incidents are questioned and challenged. Understanding behaviours displayed such as triggers, relation to mood. Individual Behaviour Plans Gaining the views, wishes and feelings of the child. Always questioning any marks, bruises etc.
Physical Disabilities Physical disabilities can present a significant barrier for some children as it can limit their independence and personal ability to keep safe.	Always questioning any marks, bruises etc. – never assuming why an injury may be present. Using times such as during personal care to be vigilant against marks and bruises.

	Ensuring open dialogue and trusting relationships at all times.
Marks and Physical Injuries Assumptions that marks relate to the child's physical disability or individual need without further exploration.	Always questioning any marks, bruises etc. – never assuming why an injury may be present. Seeking advice from external agencies including Children's Social Care.
Bullying and prejudice behaviours Children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities may be more at risk of bullying and prejudice behaviour. Children with SEND may be more prone to peer group isolation.	Ensuring that equality, diversity and difference is taught to all children throughout school. Challenging and dealing with anti-bullying incidents immediately. Supporting children with forming healthy friendships with their peers.
Cognitive difficulties Some children may have difficulty understanding or recognising abuse. Some children may not understand the difference between fact and fiction online and repeating the content online.	Ensure PSHE and SMSC lessons are differentiated accordingly. Clear and direct conversations to be had regularly with those who are most vulnerable.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- a) Our prevention procedures
- b) The school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting all pupils in our school especially those who are identified as being vulnerable. All staff will adopt a consistent approach which focuses on the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School recognises that all behaviour is a form of communication and we aim to address any underlying issues through pastoral intervention and reflection.
- c) Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School is committed to working with the appropriate agencies that best support our children and their families.
- d) We will continue to refer for children who are already open to Social Care and will exercise the St. Helens Local Authority's escalation policy when deemed necessary.
- e) When any vulnerable pupil leaves our school, all information will be transferred to the new school immediately and Social Care would be informed where necessary.

Safeguarding and Attendance

If a child is absent who is deemed to be vulnerable and contact is not made with the school regarding their absence, then the headteacher or another member of staff may call to the family home to ensure the child's safety.

If a child is absent who is on a Child Protection Plan and contact is not made with the school regarding their absence, then the DSL or another member of staff will inform Children's Social Care.

When a child is continually missing school, Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School will follow Local Authority

procedures and will work with the appropriate agencies and seek support including Education Welfare. We also have our own EWO from the trust who will assist in contacting and supporting parents

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is directly linked to the school's Attendance Policy.

At Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, we acknowledge that good attendance is essential not only for academic attainment, but also to ensure the safety of the child. As a result of this, we have set procedures in place to ensure the safety of pupils through their attendance.

- If a vulnerable child is absent, then school will contact parents. A home visit may result.
- A child on Child Protection or is LAC is monitored carefully. The school will satisfy itself that there is no immediate risk of harm and will have attendance issues addressed through the CP Plan or Family Action meetings or the PEP in the case of LAC.
- When a Child is Missing Education (CME), Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School will follow Education Welfare's Child Missing Education Policy and Procedures.

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/schools-education/education-welfare-service/children-missing-education/>

- There is a named CME Officers within the Education Welfare Service. The named CME officers for St. Helens is Helen McCabe – Tel 01744 675574

There is also a dedicated CME email address for any enquiries relating to Children Missing Education. The email address is: cme@sthelens.gov.uk

- Children must be collected by a known adult from school. Although there is no specific age limit, older children in Y5 and Y6 may be considered by their parents safe and responsible enough to make their own way to and from school. These children must not be responsible for younger children. (See collection of children from school policy)
- Any adult with Parental Responsibility has the right to collect their child from school, unless there is a Contact, Residency or Child Arrangement Order in place, or if there are child protection concerns surrounding a parent or carer. For families with orders in place, we ask parents and carers to inform us of any such instance and provide paper evidence where necessary. Please note we will not keep original copies of orders but may take photocopies which will be stored securely within the child's individual safeguarding file.

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School will always strive to put the correct interventions into place to ensure that Persistent Absentees and low attenders improve their attendance.

If a pupil goes missing from the school site during the school day, the parent or carer and the Police will be informed immediately; it may also be appropriate to notify Children's Social Care.

Once a child has left the school premises, it is the responsibility of the Police and not staff to try and secure the child. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School recognises that it may be more dangerous for both staff and the child, if staff were to try and secure the individual.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras in Schools

For pupils:

- Parents give their consent to access to individual forms of technology at the start of school.
- Parental consent is sought for a child's image to be collected and/or shared in a variety of formats.
- Pupils taking and sharing images when in school will use the school's technology eg camera or I pad and will be supervised by a member of staff. Phones are not permitted to be used at other events eg PTA disco.
- Pupils in Year 5 and 6 may bring a mobile phone to school as some travel to and from school. Pupils turn off their phones and ensure that they do not leave their book bag which is stored away until home time. Photographs using mobile phones on the premises is not permitted.

For parents and carers:

- Parents may take videos or photographs/images of their own child for personal use.
- Sharing of images on social media of children in school is not permitted.
- Complaints or grievances must not be aired and shared on social media. Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School has a Complaints Policy which can address any parental concerns. The headteacher and senior leaders in the school are always willing to hear concerns before they become complaints in order to address any issues to a satisfactory conclusion.

For staff:

- Staff must not take images of pupils on personal mobile phones.
- Staff can use an ipad or camera to take images on trips and then download them immediately to the school network, so GDPR is not compromised.
- Staff must not use personal mobile phones during the school day unless they are in an area where children do not go e.g. staffroom at break times.
- All staff follow the policies that have been adopted by the governing body and subsequent consequences if policy is breached.

Safer Recruitment

- The school follows safer recruitment procedures, including the statutory pre-employment checks on all staff working with young people.
- When jobs are advertised we consider skills, experience, attitudes and behaviours that are needed for the post.
- Adverts will always comment on our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We make clear the safeguarding checks that will be undertaken including online due diligence checks in line with KCSIE 2025.
- We ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are included in the job description
- All applicants must provide personal details, current and former names, current address and current national insurance number
- Applicants must also provide details of their present or last employment and reasons for leaving, full employment history, school education, qualifications and 2 references one of which must be their last employer.
- Applicants will also be asked to provide a personal specification detailing why they are fit for the role.
- At least one member of the shortlisting panel will have safer recruitment training
- Applicants are short listed considering their ability to fulfil the job description, no unexplained gaps in previous employment, valid referees
- Shortlisted candidates are given the opportunity to sign that they are not prohibited from teaching, included on the barred list or have a previous criminal record.
- Candidates will be assessed on their knowledge and ability to fulfil the job description by answering questions and completing set tasks.
- Successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information
- Candidates applying for leadership roles will be subject to a section 128 check

Single Central Record

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School uses and maintains a Single Central Record. This system holds information and checks on:

All staff including trainees

Agency staff

Council staff

Any visitor to the school

The Single Central record is checked monthly by the Head teacher and it is checked and signed off by the governor responsible for safeguarding at least annually.

Blended/ Remote Learning

During times when children need to work remotely at home using digital and online materials, Rainford Brook Lodge will endeavour to take every action necessary to keep children safe.

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary will do this by:

- using a chosen app (School Spider) to communicate with families
- recording lessons and never using live streaming
- providing children with direct links to educational materials that are safe
- ensuring that every child's family receives a weekly phone call from school and never from home or a personal mobile device
- liaising with a St Helens Educational Welfare Officer to monitor vulnerable/ susceptible children
- ensuring that staff can still contact the DSL and deputy DSL for reporting purposes
- advising parents/carers to secure their online safety using packages such as McAfee through the E-safety section of the website.
- Setting work across the curriculum that teaches children about staying safe online and at home

Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following this child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

The DSL's at Rainford Brook Lodge will reference the Anna Freud National centre for children and families for guidance and support regarding mental health concerns. We will also use the services provided by the school nurse, St Helens MHST and CAMHS. Our Senior Mental Health Leader is Ms Kathryn Hodkinson. We also liaise with outside agencies to support our children, where appropriate

Private Fostering

Private Fostering is where a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability) goes to live with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more. It is a private agreement between a parent and another adult.

A close relative includes a parent, step-parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether blood related or through marriage). Private foster carers may be from the extended family such as a cousin or great aunt, a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child or someone previously unknown to the child's family.

Examples of private fostering could include:

- Children or young people who are sent to this country for education or health care by their parents from overseas.
- Teenagers living with a friend's family because they do not get on with their own family.
- Children living with a friend's family because their parents study or work involves unsociable hours, which makes it difficult to use ordinary day care or after school care.
- Children staying with another family because there has been bereavement, serious illness or their parents have divorced or separated.
- A child from overseas staying with a host family while attending school or overseas students at boarding school who do not stay with a host family during the holidays.

Education and other professionals have a duty to notify the Local Authority and Children's social care when they believe there is a private fostering arrangement and they are not satisfied that the Local Authority has been or will be notified by the parent or carer.

Private Foster carers also have a responsibility to notify the Local Authority.

If a member of staff or any individual believes that a child is being privately fostered, they must contact Children's Social Care or inform the Designate Senior Lead who will make the referral.

E-Safety

ICT in the 21st Century is an essential resource to support learning and teaching, as well as playing an important role in the everyday lives of children, young people and adults. Consequently, at Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, we need to build in the use of these technologies to arm our young people with the skills to access life-long learning and employment. E-safety involves pupils, staff, governors and parents making best use of technology, information, training and the E - safety policy has been created to maintain a safe online and ICT environment.

We ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum with Relationships Health and Sex Education. (Mandatory from September 2020). Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School refer to the DfE Teaching Online Safety in School January 2023 for guidance when planning curriculum and how online safety fits within it, including supporting vulnerable pupils. (page 24) Please read this policy in conjunction with the E-safety and Anti Bullying policy. Teaching online safety and harms is also taught to children as a whole school approach through assemblies and Safer Internet Weeks as per guidance on page 26.

"As in any other area of life, children and young people are vulnerable and may expose themselves to danger - knowingly or unknowingly - when using the Internet and other digital technologies. Indeed, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal. "To ignore e-safety issues when implementing the requirements of Every Child Matters could ultimately lead to significant gaps in child protection policies, leaving children and young people vulnerable." Safeguarding Children in a Digital World. BECTA 2006

Appendix

Categories and Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. Types of physical abuse include:

- Hitting or smacking
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Poisoning
- Burning and scalding
- Drowning
- Suffocating
- Fabricating or Inducing Symptoms of illness in a child
- Any other way of causing physical harm.

Emotional Abuse

the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve one or more of the following:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

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

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, developmental and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. This can also occur during pregnancy as a result of parental substance misuse. This includes when a parent or carer fails to provide:

- Adequate food clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home and abandonment).
- Protection from physical and emotional harm and danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers).
- Access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Sexual Abuse

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 in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is a priority for St Helens LSCB due to the high number of cases. Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It's important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Types of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening to another family member or pet.

Signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening and those carrying out the abuse can act very different when other people are around. Children and young people might also feel frightened and confused, keeping the abuse to themselves.

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or bullying
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- drug or alcohol use
- eating disorders
- problems in school or trouble learning
- tantrums
- withdrawal.

Effects of domestic abuse

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.

What's important is to make sure the abuse stops and that children have a safe and stable environment to grow up in.

If a child reveals abuse, then the same procedures for any disclosure are applied

Reports of domestic abuse that have required police to be called are emailed through the Operation Encompass scheme to school, whereupon a raised awareness can then be provided for the child(ren) involved. This involves where children see, hear or experience its effects.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken to follow their school or college's child protection policy and by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Female Genital Mutilation or FGM

Female Genital Mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It occurs mainly in Africa and to a lesser extent, in the Middle East and Asia; however, children living in the United Kingdom are still at risk of this form of abuse. Although it is believed by many to be a religious issue, it is in fact a cultural practice. There are no health benefits to Female Genital Mutilation. Communities particularly affected by FGM in the UK include girls from: Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea, Yemen, Indonesia and Afghanistan. In the UK, FGM tends to occur in areas with larger populations of communities who practice FGM, such as first-generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Key Points:

- It is NOT a religious practice.
- Occurs mostly to girls aged 5-8 years old; but up to around 15.
- It has been a criminal offence in the United Kingdom since 1985.
- Offence since 2003 to take girls abroad
- Criminal penalties include up to 14 years in prison. Reasons for this cultural practice include:
- Cultural identity – an initiation into womanhood.
- Gender identity – moving from a girl to a woman – enhancing femininity
- Sexual control – reduce the woman's desire for sex
- Hygiene/cleanliness – un mutilated women are regarded as unclean. Risk Factors include:
- Low level integration into UK society
- Mother or sister who has undergone FGM
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- A visiting female elder from the country of origin
- Being taken on a long holiday to the family's country of origin
- Talk about a 'special' event or procedure to 'become a woman' High Risk Time

This procedure often takes place in the summer, as the recovery period for FGM can be 6 to 9 weeks. Schools must be alert to the possibility of FGM as a reason why a girl in a high-risk group is absent from school or where the family request an 'authorised absence' for just before or just after the summer school holidays.

Although it is difficult to identify girls before FGM takes place, where girls from these high-risk groups return from long periods of absence with symptoms of FGM, advice must be sought from the police or social services. It is a mandatory reporting duty under section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted section 74 of the Serious Crime

Act 2015) there is a statutory duty upon school staff (specifically teaching staff) to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.

Post FGM symptoms include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Unusual behaviour after a lengthy absence
- Reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Longer term problems include:

- Difficulties urinating or incontinence
- Frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- Menstrual problems
- Kidney damage and possible failure
- Cysts and abscesses
- Pain when having sex
- Infertility
- Complications during pregnancy and childbirth
- Emotional and mental health problems

Forced Marriage

There is a clear difference between 'forced marriage' and 'arranged marriage'. Arranged marriages have worked well in society for many years. An arranged marriage is when 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 prospective spouses.

A forced marriage is when one or both parties do not consent to the marriage, and people are forced into marriage against their will. Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights. Both physical and emotional abuse may be used to coerce people into the marriage.

In law both parties to a marriage must validly consent to the marriage, the minimum age a person is able to consent to a marriage is 16. A Force Marriage Protection Order can be obtained from a Family Court in order to protect victim, both adults and children from a potential forced marriage or people who are already in a forced marriage.

Potential warning signs or indicators that a child is at risk of Forced Marriage

- Absence and persistent absence
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance.
- Poor exam results
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility
- Removal from a day centre of a person with a physical or learning disability
- Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School acknowledges that persistent absence from school or requests for leave of absence can be an indicator of a potential safeguarding risk. The issues surrounding Forced Marriage link directly to the school attendance policy; any absences from school will be followed up in accordance with this policy. This is to ensure that we make every effort to know a child's whereabouts and make sure they are safe to the best of our ability.

What to do if you have a concern regarding Forced Marriage?

Forced Marriage is an offence and if this is happening to a child under the age of 18 it is considered to be child abuse. If you suspect that a child or young person is being forced to marry then you must share your concerns with the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) who will make appropriate contact with Children's Social Care or the Police.

The Forced Marriage unit can be contacted for advice and help in making the referral.

Telephone 020 70080151

Faith Abuse and so-called honour-based abuse

Faith Abuse

This can include Forced Marriage and FGM (detailed above) but on rare occasions may include child abuse linked to accusations of 'possession' or 'witchcraft'. Children involved can suffer damage to their physical and mental health, their capacity to learn, their ability to form relationships and to their self-esteem. It is likely that a proportion of this type of abuse remains unreported.

Such abuse generally occurs when a carer views a child as being 'different', attributes this difference to the child being 'possessed' or involved in 'witchcraft' and attempts to exorcise him or her.

A child could be viewed as 'different' for a variety of reasons such as, disobedience; independence; bed-wetting; nightmares; illness; or disability. There is often a weak bond of attachment between the carer and the child.

There are various social reasons that make a child more vulnerable to an accusation of 'possession' or 'witchcraft'. These include family stress and/or a change in the family structure.

The attempt to 'exorcise' may involve severe beating, burning, starvation, cutting or stabbing and isolation, and usually occurs in the household where the child lives.

Any siblings or other children in the household may be well cared for with all their needs met by the parents and carers. The other children may have been drawn in by the adults to view the child as 'different' and may have been encouraged to participate in the adult activities.

Serious Violence

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

So-called 'Honour' Based Violence

So-called 'honour' based violence is a term used to describe violence committed against a woman or a girl (or sometimes men) who the family or the community feels has not followed what they believe is acceptable behaviour and has brought dishonour or shame to the family.

What sort of behaviours lead to so-called 'honour' based violence?

Women and girls can experience violence or, in the most extreme form, be killed for a wide variety of behaviours, which can range from very trivial, such as talking to a male who is not a relative to being sexually assaulted or raped. Some common 'behaviours' are:

- defying their parents
- talking to a male who is not related to the family
- seeking a divorce or seeking residence of the children after divorce
- refusing to marry a man chosen by the family (rejecting a forced marriage)
- sexual relationships or pregnancy before or outside of marriage (including kissing or intimacy in public)
- becoming 'western' (wearing make-up or clothes deemed inappropriate, having male friends or boyfriends from another faith etc.)
- gossip (rumours can damage the 'honour' of a family)
- using drugs or drinking alcohol

- being sexually assaulted or raped
- being homosexual.

Is 'honour' based violence linked to religion?

So-called 'honour' based violence is not a religious based issue it has been recorded in communities practising every major religion, including Jewish, Sikh, Christian, Hindu and Muslim communities. The underlying belief behind so-called 'honour' based violence is to maintain the control over women by the men within the family or community by denying women autonomy over their lives – including decisions such as who to marry, their sex lives or divorce and their human rights.

If a child or young person, or member of their family is at risk or suspected of being exposed to Faith Abuse or 'honour' based violence, concerns must be passed on to the Designated Senior Lead Mr P. Reece or Mrs K. Hodgkinson immediately. The child or young person will then be referred onto the Police and contact may also be made with Children's Social Care.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and/or extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy (2010) as:

Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity crisis – the pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal crisis – the pupil may be experiencing family tensions, a sense of isolation; and low self- esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship groups and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting a pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Experiences of criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment and poor resettlement/reintegration
- Special Educational Needs – the pupil may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motives of others

(This is not an exhaustive list, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism).

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School's work reflects the government PREVENT strategy (July 2015) in their approach to radicalisation and extremism. Staff are required to read elements of the prevent strategy relating to school and

education. Any concerns regarding radicalisation or extremism in children and young people must be passed onto the school's single point of contact or SPOC.

The SPOC will then refer on to the local PREVENT officer, Children's Social Care and/or the Police. The PREVENT single point of contact (SPOC) in school are the Designated Senior Leads Mr. P Reece and Mrs K. Hodkinson. The PREVENT officer for St. Helens is Georgia Lee.

In relation to the threat of terrorist attacks, Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School has considered advice from DfE in relation to risk assessments for out-of-school trips. All risk assessments are discussed with the headteacher before authorisation of the trip takes place.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation is sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18. It involves situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/ mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/ economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Warning Signs and Symptoms of Child Sexual Exploitation

- Can be difficult to identify and can be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour
- Be involved in abusive relationships
- Hang out with groups of older people, anti-social groups or with other vulnerable peers
- Associates with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- Get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang memberships
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Spend time at places of concern such as hotels or known brothels
- Not know where they are because they have been moved around the country
- Go missing from home, care or education
- Have expensive items such as mobile phones that they can't or won't explain.
- Be very secretive about what they are doing online
- Have access to drugs or alcohol.

Child Criminal Exploitation

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

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation

often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

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

How do we manage suspected cases of Child Sexual Exploitation or Child Criminal Exploitation?

Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School will respond to suspected cases of Child Sexual Exploitation in relation to St. Helens safeguarding procedures.

St. Helens Safeguarding Children's Board has its own subgroup dedicated to CSE known as Multi Agency Child Exploitation group(MACE)

If a child or young person is at risk or suspected of being sexually or criminally exploited, concerns must be passed on to the Designated Senior Lead Mr P. Reece or Mrs K. Hodgkinson immediately. The child or young person will then be referred onto the Police and contact may also be made with Children's Social Care.

Referral forms can be found on St. Helens Safeguarding Children's Board website within the Merseyside Multi Agency Protocol Child Sexual Exploitation or a copy can be requested from the Designated Senior Lead within School. This is a CE1 form which is in line with the Pan-Merseyside Protocol.

Child on Child Abuse

At Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, we put in place safeguards to reduce the likelihood of child on child allegations. There is an established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness with a clear, high profile Behaviour Policy which sets out our expectations, rewards and consequences for unacceptable behaviour together with visible staff presence.

Definition

There is no clear boundary between incidents that must be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement.

Child-on-child 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 children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- 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)
- Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. UKCIS provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.
- 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 used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this must not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this must be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

Staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Risks

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse must be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and must be subject to the same child protection procedures.

Professionals must not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and must not develop high thresholds before acting.

Professionals must be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Professionals must be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or at risk of suffering, Significant Harm and in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

Protection and action to be taken

It is not enough to respond to incidents as they arise: all agencies that work with children must strive to create an environment that actively discourages abuse and challenges the attitudes which underlie it. Agencies must have a policy on bullying, and on sexual and racial harassment. They must also consider the effect of adult behaviour on children who may view them as role models.

Other policies (and more importantly their implementation) such as the Behaviour for Learning policy; Anti-Bullying

policy; Mobile Phone policy; E-safety policy ensure that Rainford Brook Lodge is an environment where children can learn and play safely but also feel comfortable to tell a trusted adult if problems do arise.

Any professional who feels that a young person has abused another child or young person must notify school's child protection officer, without delay.

The Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School safeguarding team will consider:

- Whether the alleged perpetrator seems to pose a continuing risk to any child;
- How to protect any child who appears to be at immediate risk of significant harm;
- Whether Section 47 Enquiries must be initiated (or continued if they have already begun) and how they must be handled; and
- What action must be taken in respect of the alleged perpetrator, for example arranging a risk management meeting.
- What actions will be taken to support the victim (this will depend on the nature of the abuse and the age of the child)

It is important to co-ordinate action to address these issues: no agency must initiate action that has implications for another agency without appropriate consultation unless this is unavoidable in order to protect the safety of a child.

The management of safeguarding can be further explained in the Keeping Children Safe in Education Document 2023 At Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, our 3 safeguarding partners are:

Local authority (LA)
Clinical commissioning group within the LA
Chief office of police within the LA

There are a number of factors that make children more vulnerable to child on child abuse: experience of abuse within their family; living with domestic violence young people in care; children who go missing; children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities).

Research tells us girls are more frequently identified as being abused by their peers, girls are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching in schools. Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse. Boys report high levels of victimisation in areas where they are affected by gangs. There is an increasing evidence base emerging on the sexual exploitation of boys (both by adults and peers). We recognise that both boys and girls experience peer on peer abuse but they do so in gendered ways

Sexting

The school recognises that 'sexting' is a growing concern amongst professionals and parents as it can expose children to risks, particularly if the imagery is shared further. It can lead to embarrassment, bullying and increased vulnerability to sexual exploitation. Producing and sharing images of under-18's is also illegal.

There is no clear definition of what is 'sexting' and indeed many professionals, young people and parents have different interpretations ranging from sending flirty messages to sending nude or semi-nude photographs via mobiles or over the internet.

This guidance is based on the UKCCIS Sexting in Schools and Colleges guidance 2018. The full guidance is located at UKCCIS 2018 Guidance. This guidance covers:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with

- a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 It does not cover:
- The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse and schools must always inform the police and CSC.
- Young people under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which don't contain imagery.

The term youth produced sexual imagery has been adopted to provide some clarity and to distinguish it from imagery where there are adults involved in some manner.

The purpose of this guidance is to make expectations clear to pupils and their parents and carers as well as to be clear to staff about the school's policy and procedure in responding to incidents.

This policy forms part of our school's safeguarding arrangements and our response to concerns about 'sexting' will be guided by the principle of proportionality and our primary concern at all times is the welfare and protection of the children and young people involved.

The school recognises that it is an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to possess, distribute, show and make indecent images of children (a child being under 18 year) but it does not define what is indecent.

However, the police accept that the law which criminalised indecent images of children was created before the technological advances of today and it originally sought to protect children from adults. It was not intended to criminalise children. Despite this, children who share sexual imagery of themselves or peers are breaking the law and therefore we will seek to manage this type of case appropriately.

All professionals including the National Police Chiefs Council agree that incidents involving youth produced imagery must primarily be treated as a safeguarding issue. It is agreed that we must not unnecessarily criminalise children as the consequence of this can be significant in terms of their life chances in adulthood. Where children do share images, it is often as a result of natural curiosity and exploring relationships and in the context of the digital world we live in. The school is therefore empowered to deal with the majority of these incidents without involving the police.

Up-skirting

The school recognises that up skirting is a growing concern amongst professionals and parents and it can expose children to risks. Definition of Up skirting: Up skirting is typically when a photograph is taken under a person's clothing without them knowing, for sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or harm.

Victims will be re-assured and taken seriously and supported and kept safe. The referral process will take place as set out in paragraph 36 in Part one of the KCSE. If staff are in any doubt they would speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL

The school may become aware of the issue in a variety of ways i.e. from the child direct, a friend of parent or a member of staff. We recognise that the child is likely to be very embarrassed and worried about what might happen. We also recognise the pressure that is on a child can be under to take part in sharing such imagery but we will reassure them they are not on their own and will help and support them. We will also help them to understand what has happened and the context for the concerns. We will also discuss issues of consent and trust within healthy relationships.

All incidents will be followed in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy. Where an incident comes to our attention:

- The incident will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.
- An initial meeting with the appropriate school staff will be held to:
- Establish if there is immediate risk & what further information is needed, whether or not the imagery has been

shared

- Consider facts about the children involved which could influence a risk assessment.
- A meeting with the young person will be held (if appropriate)
- Parents will generally be informed at an early stage

An immediate referral to children's social care and/or the police must be made if at the initial stage:

- The incident involves an adult
- The child has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed or if there are concerns about capacity to consent
- If the sexual acts are unusual for the developmental age or violent
- Children under 13 years are involved
- The child is at immediate risk e.g. suicidal or self-harming

Where the above do not apply then the school will generally deal with this matter without involving the police or children's social care although this will be subject to review.

This decision is made where we are confident that we have sufficient information to assess and manage any risks within our pastoral support and disciplinary framework. The decision will be made by the DSL and others as appropriate and will be recording.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

At Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School we have an effective preventative education programme with a whole school approach that prepares children for life in modern Britain. We have a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. This is underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the whole curriculum. The curriculum has been developed according to the appropriate age and stage of development. (especially when considering SEND children and their cognitive understanding), and may tackle such issues as:

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- what respectful behaviour looks like;
- gender roles, stereotyping, equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- prejudiced behaviour;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong;
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment.

We follow guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 on how we must respond to reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Further information can be found in the extra publication on sexual violence and harassment between children in schools and colleges - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges which covers:

- what sexual violence and sexual harassment is
- schools' and colleges' legal responsibilities
- a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and child protection
- how to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Serious Violent Crime

Staff have been made aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. This may be:

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups

- A significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm
- Significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault, or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that individuals are involved with criminal networks or gangs.

Further advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement March 2015 Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adult's County Lines Guidance Sept 2018.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are "highly stressful, and potentially traumatic, events or situations that occur during childhood and/or adolescence. They can be a single event, or prolonged threats to, and breaches of, the young person's safety, security, trust or bodily integrity." (Young Minds, 2018).

Examples of ACEs:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Living with someone who abused drugs
- Living with someone who abused alcohol
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Living with someone who has gone to prison
- Living with someone with serious mental illness
- Losing a parent through divorce, death or abandonment

At Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School, any child who is thought to have experienced an adverse childhood experience will be monitored on the school safeguarding system, CPOMS. We will work with CAMHS support in order to support any child who has suffered a traumatic experience at home.

Use of School facilities by outside agencies

If an allegation is made about an adult working for an outside agency or contractor on school site Rainford Brook Lodge will:

Assess if the person:

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

If any concerns are found, the school would contact LADO for immediate support.

Parents who would wish to raise a concern about an adult using school facilities outside of term time

would report to Mr P Reece at brooklodesafeguarding@emst.org.uk

If it is found that a child has been harmed or is in immediate risk of harm, Social Care Services or the Police will be contacted.

With regards to supply teachers, allegations would be referred to the agency of which they are under employment with, who will then action their own safeguarding policies and procedures.

Outcomes of investigations would include:

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence, or

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Other school documents that relate to this policy:

Child Protection flow chart

Allegations Procedures

Confidential Reporting/Whistleblowing Policy

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

E – Safety Policy

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Inspecting Safeguarding in the Early Years – Ofsted

The Prevent Duty

Safer Recruitment Policy

Children Missing Education

Behaviour for Learning Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Supervision Policy

Mobile Technology Policy