Catcote Academy
(Part of Hartlepool Aspire Trust)
Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy February 2022

Purpose and Aim

Catcote Academy's *Child Protection Policy* aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child welfare concerns. This policy also aims to make explicit, the academy''s commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe in our academy. This policy recognises that abuse can occur in all communities and contexts and that all staff have a responsibility and the opportunity to support children, in sharing concerns and worries in school to feel safe. The whole academy culture of vigilance in Catcote Academy creates a safe space where children are supported, listened to and valued in what they choose to share and that ALL staff act immediately with the necessary level of intervention to create the most effective outcome for every individual child.

The purpose of this policy is, therefore, to ensure that our children's welfare is of paramount importance, early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and where child protection concerns are identified referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's well-being.

From September 2021 to March 2022, there will be five classes based at CECA (Centre for Excellence in Creative Arts), due to an extension being built on the main academy site.
Catcote students will be supervised within the building and all staff are aware that students need escorting to and from the toilets due to members of the public accessing the building at times. Specified toilets are used for Catcote students **only** throughout their time at CECA.
All doors are fob operated and all staff carry relevant fobs on their lanyards.
There is a receptionist present at CECA site from 8:30 till 4:00pm each day to monitor and record all staff and visitors.

Trustees and staff are committed within Catcote Academy to keeping children safe by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our care through all our policies, procedures and practices. We expect all our students' parents and visitors to share this commitment and understanding.

Introduction
Catcote Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the students in its care. There are four main elements to Catcote Academy's *Child Protection Policy*:

1. **Prevention** (positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to students, providing good adult role models and the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and recognising and reducing risks to children including harassment, bullying/cyber-bullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, victimisation, sexual violence and sexual harassment, criminal/sexual exploitation including county lines and serious violent crime, preventing radicalisation (extremism, radicalisation and

terrorism) and issues such as honour based abuse, female genital mutilation and forced marriage).

2. **Protection** (following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training and updates at least annually and are supported to refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Gillian Durkin or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads Anne Johnson, Lisa Grieg, Lyn Younger, Emma Straker or The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees (01429 284284 / 01642 130080) directly IF NECESSARY. In certain specific cases such as female genital mutilation (Mandatory reporting of FGM from October 2015), radicalisation or forced marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted).

3. **Reconsideration** (following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child's circumstances).

4. **Support** (for students and academy staff and for children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances or extra-familial harm and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes).

All staff have the added responsibility of recognising that there may be children with additional vulnerability who remain at higher risk of harm or abuse because of their existing vulnerability. All academy staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

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

- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

(KCSIE 2021)

All staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect and peer on peer (child on child) abuse in its many forms. This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and a safe educational environment for all children. 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. Additional guidance on how our academy supports the following areas of additional need or harm are provided in the hyperlinked documents in Appendix 1 of this *Child Protection Policy* and includes the full list taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Broadly the areas taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021 Annex B, include:
- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children in the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Cybercrime
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- So called 'Honour Based Abuse' inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage.
- FGM
- Forced Marriage
- Preventing Radicalisation
- The Prevent duty
- Channel
- Additional Support
- Peer on Peer / Child on Child Abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Upskirting
- The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Additional advice and support

(**KCSIE 2021)**

In the event of any of the above issues being recognised, information should be shared directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputies which will result in the situation being recorded, evaluated and support offered in the academy or the student being referred to specific services.

This policy applies to Catcote Academy's whole workforce.

Framework and Legislation

No school operates in isolation. Keeping children safe from significant harm is the responsibility of all adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership, which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with children and families across the borough.

Catcote Academy is committed to keeping children safe and safeguarding all children in accordance with Child Protection: Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership https://www.hsscp.co.uk/ and partner agencies in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm

Significant Harm is defined in The Children's Act 1989 as the ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and physical abuse) or the impairment of health (physical or mental) or development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural) as compared to a similar child.

Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person.
(Adoption and Children Act 2002)

Local Authorities have a duty to investigate (under S47 of the Children Act 1989). Where a Local Authority is informed that there is a child who is living, or is found, in their area and they have reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm they must make such enquiries as necessary to promote or safeguard the child's welfare. The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees undertakes this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority once a referral has been made.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021 contains information on what schools and colleges should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges must comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 which applies to all schools, including maintained Nursery schools. The Children Act 1989 sets out the legal framework.

Roles and Responsibilities For All Staff

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting ALL children from maltreatment and abuse; (including in addition to the four categories of harm, issues such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines and serious violent crime, honour based abuse (HBA) inclusive of female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, preventing radicalisation (extremism, radicalisation and terrorism), harassment, bullying including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and victimisation) preventing impairment of children's health (physical and mental 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 includes everyone under the age of 18.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Due to the regular contact with children, all staff at Catcote Academy hold a particularly important role in safeguarding as we are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and to prevent concerns from escalating. Children can make disclosures or show signs of abuse at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools. Therefore, through an induction process and the sharing of this policy to all staff, students and volunteers, it is important that ALL staff:

- Ensure that they clearly understand the acdemy's systems and procedures for sharing information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as shared in this policy.

- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times (taking the child's wishes and feeling into account) and reassure them that they will take seriously any concerns raised to them by the child and both support them and keep them safe. This will include determining what action to take and what services to provide on behalf of the child in need (for non-safeguarding concerns).

- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and consistently promote a culture of vigilance in the academy, where concerns are shared and dealt with as soon as possible (however, ALL staff can refer their concerns directly to The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above. They should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible if they have reported concerns directly).

- Ensure that they immediately share with the Designated Safeguarding Lead information shared with them by a child or directly observed/witnessed and record it. This could include sharing

information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies. All discussions, decisions and reasons for them should be recorded on CPOMS. Staff should never let fears of sharing information stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here' in respect of any safeguarding issues** and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child/an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher.

- Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices of staff and potential failures in the academy's safeguarding regime through *whistleblowing procedures* and the *Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low-Level') Concerns Policy.*

- Ensure that they attend regular formal training/updates at least annually to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child.

- Ensure from the 1st July 2015 for schools, that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, April 2015, that the academy has 'due regard to Prevent' and to assess risk of children and young people being radicalised or drawn into extremism/terrorism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols are in place for all visitors so that their views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others).

- Ensure from October 2015 that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

- Ensure that they understand through online safety training that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being cases and the additional risks for students online and continue to promote the academy's *Online Safety Policy & Acceptable Usage* in the protection of all students. This includes the management of internet access via children's own mobile phones or electronic devices that can allow them unlimited access to the internet without any restrictions using their own data allowance. It should be clear in the academy's *Online Safety Policy & Acceptable Usage*, the expectations of students regarding their own devices whilst on school site and the consequences of any evidence of inappropriate use of the internet. This includes not using their mobile phones or smart technology to sexually harass, share indecent images (consensually or non-consensually) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

- Ensure that they remain vigilant whilst visitors are on site and continue to promote the academy's commitment to keeping children safe through reminding visitors and parents of the academy's appropriate

use of personal mobile phones/devices whilst they are on the academy premises. This includes staff understanding and adhering to the *Code of Conduct Policy inclusive* of the use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

Catcote Academy will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Catcote Academy has appointed a senior member of staff, Gillian Durkin to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This person has the overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and has the appropriate status, authority and training to undertake such a role and is able to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This person is able to take part in strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and to support other trained staff to do so as well as contribute to the assessment of children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns (KCSIE 2021).

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

At Catcote Academy, the appointed Deputy Designated Leads are; Anne Johnson, Lisa Greig, Lyn Younger and Emma Straker who are part of the wider safeguarding team. These individuals are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies the ultimate LEAD RESPONSIBILITY for child protection will not be delegated and remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role should be explicit in their job description.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a very detailed role, (see below)

However, if there is an IMMEDIATE safeguarding concern and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Leads are unavailable please seek immediate support via The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees (01429 284284 / 01642 130080).

The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead are identified here:

Availability

During term time, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during academy hours) for staff in the academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, however, in exceptional circumstances availability maybe via phone or virtual means.

It is a matter for the academy to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Manage Referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and designated safeguarding deputies are expected to refer cases:

- Of suspected abuse to The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees and support staff who make referrals to The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees.

- To the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.

- Where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.

- Where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

Work with others

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff,

- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners (Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership)

- Liaise with the Headteacher/CEO to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.

- As required liaise with the case manager (Headteacher/CEO, or where the Headteacher/CEO is the subject of the allegations the Chair of Trustees) and the Designated Officer, operating on behalf of the Local Authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member).

- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, Health Care Assistant, IT manager, Site manager, SENCo and Senior Mental Health Lead) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.

- Liaise with the Senior Mental Health Lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;

- Work with the Headteacher/CEO and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at the academy.

- Ensure that the academy knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress

and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.

- Support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information Sharing and Managing the Child Protection File

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information is kept confidential and stored securely.

Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern

- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;

- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice.

Where children leave the academy (including in-year transfers) the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads/SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the academy's *Child Protection Policy* and procedures, especially new and part-time staff.

- Ensure the academy's *Child Protection Policy* is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Trustees regarding this.

- Ensure the *Child Protection Policy* is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the academy's in this.

- Link with the Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker, are experiencing with teachers and academy's leadership staff.

Training, Knowledge and Skills

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide Designated Safeguarding Leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and Local Authority children's social care referral arrangements.

- Have a working knowledge of how Local Authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

- Understand the importance of the role the Designated Safeguarding Lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and well-being, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the academy's, and with the safeguarding partners (Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership), other agencies, organisations and practitioners.

- Understand and support the academy with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalization.

- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at the academy

- Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.

- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses and

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- Ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes.

- Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the academy may put in place to protect them;
- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

Designated Safeguarding Leads should be equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the academy, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

(Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021: Annex C.)

In addition, Safeguarding First Ltd recommends as best practice that the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead's & Head of Corporate Services:

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the academy's suite of safeguarding policies particularly the *Child Protection Policy* and *Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse Policy* and the *Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concern) Policy,* especially new or part-time staff.

- Be aware of all academy excursions and residentials and clarify with educational visit co-ordinator/group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding/child protection.

- Ensure that supervision is in place for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and is a well embedded process in the academy that allows for

critical and reflective practice to promote the educational outcomes and improved mental health and wellbeing of all vulnerable children.

- Ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber-bullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among students, is in place, as a stand-alone policy but also covered in the *Ready to Learn Policy*.

- Inform LA of any student to be deleted from school admission register and follow missing from education protocols.

- Inform the LA of any students who fails to attend the academy regularly, or has been absent without the academies permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Responsibilities of Catcote Academy's Trustees

Trustees should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021.

Trustees should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility for the academy's safeguarding arrangements.

At Catcote Academy the senior lead trustee for safeguarding is Gillian Fletcher.

The role of this individual is to:

- Ensure that the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding and child protection activity and challenge the safeguarding activity.

- Ensure the annual safeguarding audit and the termly Safeguarding report, demonstrates fully and accurately the safeguarding arrangements and any action to progress areas of weakness or development.

- Ensure that the Governing Body receives training to clarify their statutory role in keeping children safe to support their quality assurance of those statutory arrangements.

- Ensure that the Governing Body is aware of their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and the need for the academy to understand their role in effective multi-agency working under the new arrangements.

The role of the Chair of Trustees in safeguarding is to:

- Ensure that they liaise with the Local Authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Head teacher/CEO.

- Ensure that in the event of allegations of abuse being made against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) and the Head teacher/CEO, allegations should be reported directly to the Designated Officer (DO). Therefore, ensuring effective whistleblowing procedures are in place.

- Ensure that the appointed member of the Trustees for safeguarding holds the Head teacher/CEO to account on all matters involving safeguarding through an effective *Child Protection Policy* that is embedded and followed by the entire workforce in all of the above raised areas.

- Ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Trustees should also ensure that this training is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school or college's safeguarding approach and culture of vigilance.

- Ensure that the academy has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to limit children's exposure to inappropriate and harmful online content and ensure that staff, students and visitors to their site follow the academy's *Online Safety Policy & Acceptable Use Policy*. Trustees should also ensure that this is regularly reviewed and risk assessed to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, keeping themselves safe, including online safety through Relationships and Sex Education and that this approach to teaching is adapted to meet the needs of more vulnerable students, victims of abuse and some SEND children.

- Ensure that a Designated Teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, including working with the Local Authority's virtual school Head teacher and discuss how student premium funding for looked after children will be used.

- Ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

- Ensure their *Child Protection Policy* reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with Special Educational Needs. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration; being more prone to peer group isolation than other children; the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

- Ensure that where children may need to learn online at home, there are clear, safe and effective protocols and provisions in place.

- Ensure that where the academy's premises are rented or hired to organisations or individuals that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

Information for Parents

At Catcote Academy, Trustees and staff are committed to keeping our children safe and will take any reasonable action to safeguard and promote their welfare. In cases where the academy has reason to be concerned that a child maybe suffering significant harm, ill treatment, neglect or other forms of harm, staff have no alternative but to follow Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and inform The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees or police of their concern.

Procedures

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL) will be informed immediately by an employee of the academy, student of the academy, parent of the academy or other persons, in the following circumstances:

- Suspicion that a child is being harmed

- There is evidence that a child is being harmed

The threshold of significant harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 Section 31 (9) as:
- Ill-treatment
- Impairment of health (as compared to a similar child)

Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002).

Working Together 2018 defines the categories of harm as:

Physical Abuse
A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse
Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

*The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer/child on child abuse) in education and **ALL** staff should be aware of it.

** It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but all peer on peer/child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Emotional Abuse
The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include

not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child though it may occur alone.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Local Authorities should share the fact a child has a Social Worker, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both Local Authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children**.**
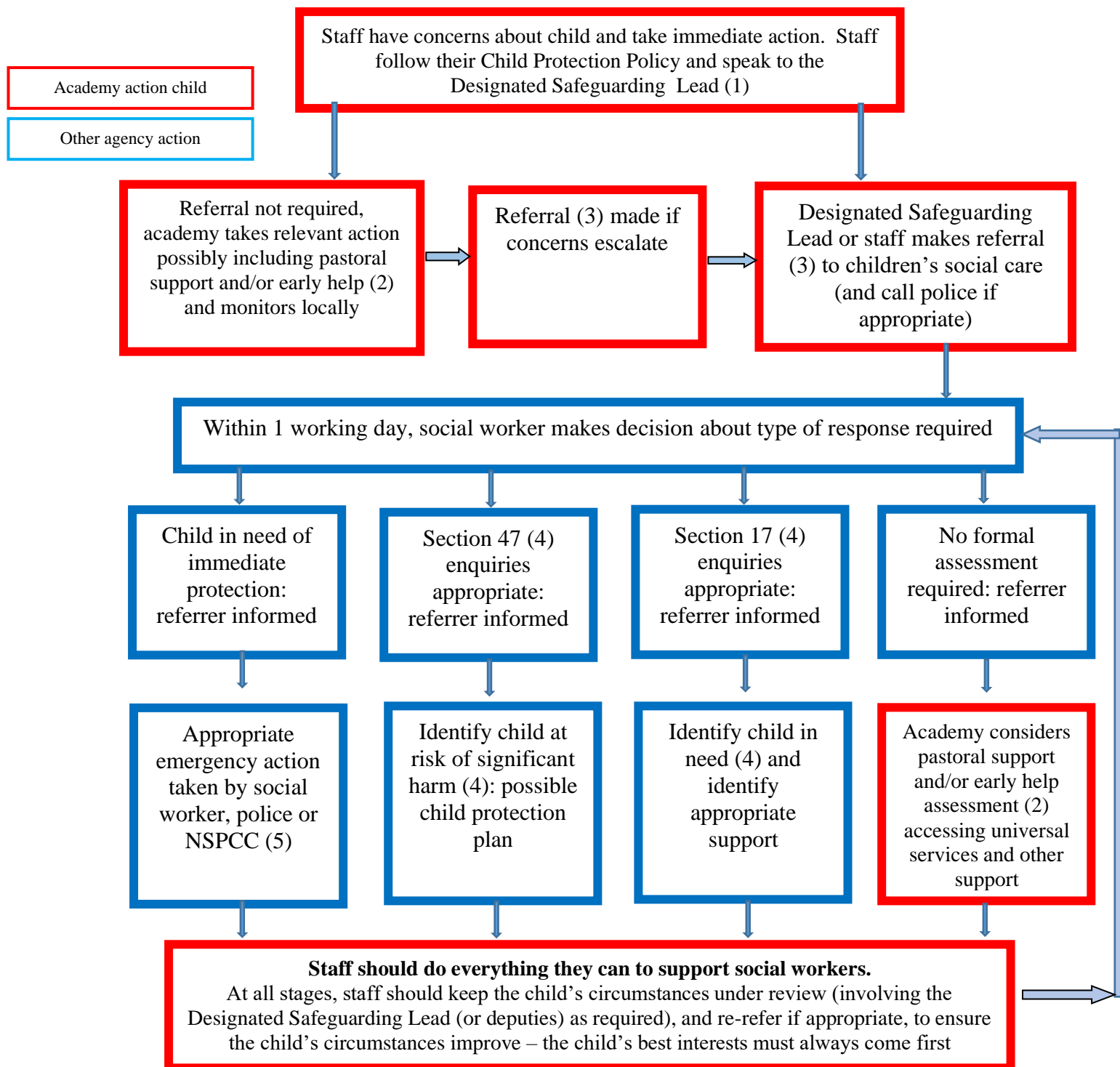
All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the academy and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. Staff should be aware that experience and indicators of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to boys but for both boys and girls being criminally exploited they maybe at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Staff should also be aware of the indicators that signal a child is at risk from or involved in serious violent crime, for example being missing from education, changing friendships, a decline in school performance, self-harming and unexplained gifts and possessions. Staff should be able to recognise the risk factors that increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, being absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to The Children's Hub Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees, if necessary. These records may be either handwritten or electronic but will be

stored via a secure system. The Head teacher/CEO will be kept informed at all times.

From KCSIE 2021
Actions where there are concerns about a child

Staff have concerns about child and take immediate action. Staff follow their Child Protection Policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (1)

Academy action child

Other agency action

Referral not required, academy takes relevant action possibly including pastoral support and/or early help (2) and monitors locally

Referral (3) made if concerns escalate

Designated Safeguarding Lead or staff makes referral (3) to children's social care (and call police if appropriate)

Within 1 working day, social worker makes decision about type of response required

Child in need of immediate protection: referrer informed

Section 47 (4) enquiries appropriate: referrer informed

Section 17 (4) enquiries appropriate: referrer informed

No formal assessment required: referrer informed

Appropriate emergency action taken by social worker, police or NSPCC (5)

Identify child at risk of significant harm (4): possible child protection plan

Identify child in need (4) and identify appropriate support

Academy considers pastoral support and/or early help assessment (2) accessing universal services and other support

Staff should do everything they can to support social workers.
At all stages, staff should keep the child's circumstances under review (involving the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies) as required), and re-refer if appropriate, to ensure the child's circumstances improve – the child's best interests must always come first

1. In cases which also involve a concern or allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of KCSIE 2021
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children
4. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children
5. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

Safe Schools/Safe Staff

Trustees have agreed and ratified the following policies, procedures, processes or systems which must be read and considered in conjunction with this policy:

Whistle Blowing

Catcote Academy's *Whistle Blowing Policy* provides guidance to staff and volunteers and contractors on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken, when staff have concerns about any adult's behaviour.

Management of a safeguarding concern or allegation about an adult

If staff have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, then this should be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Where there are concerns/allegations about the Head teacher/CEO, this should be referred to the Chair of Trustees (Mrs. H. Gordon).

There will be consultation without delay with the Designated Officer Phil Curtis, Tel: 01429 284284 will determine what action follows. A multi-agency strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context, the Headteacher/senior member of school staff must attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the Designated Officer. All issues must be recorded on the allegation management form and the outcome reached must be noted to ensure closure. **https://www.hsscp.co.uk/**

Where this concern does not meet the harm threshold, all staff should continue to follow their *Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'low-level' concerns) policy* and share information with the Head teacher/CEO. This concern may be where an adult's behaviour is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work but does not meet the allegation threshold.

Training and Support

All staff members should be aware of the systems within the academy which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of their induction into the academy to ensure they can discharge their responsibilities effectively. This includes: The *Child Protection Policy*, the policy and procedures to deal with *peer on peer/child on child abuse*; the *Ready to Learn Policy, the Anti-bullying Policy and* the *Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concern) Policy*, the safeguarding response to children who go *missing from education* and the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies.

All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) which is regularly updated. Our CPD for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of our whole academy safeguarding approach, wider staff training and curriculum planning.
At Catcote Academy, our whole school training is held annually. In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates regularly via half termly bite-size sessions and any relevant updates needed in staff meetings or via virtual means. This provides them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and allow them opportunities to contribute to reviewing and shaping the safeguarding arrangements in the academy inclusive of, the *Child Protection Policy.*

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. Catcote Academy recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership https://www.hsscp.co.uk/

Record Keeping

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. The academy has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

Well-kept records are essential for good safeguarding practice. Catcote Academy is clear about the need to record any concerns, discussions held, decisions made and reasons for those decisions about a child or children within its care. All staff will record relevant information in line with the *General Data Protection Regulations Policy.*

Following a child leaving the academy we follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines and information regarding children who have required statutory intervention at any point in their school career will automatically be shared with the receiving school. This is to ensure that all children are given the right support and intervention and information is shared strictly on a need to know basis.

Safeguarding recording within Catcote Academy is held electronically through a secure management system of CPOMS and all staff have received training in the recording expectations.

Attendance at Safeguarding Conferences

In the event of Catcote Academy being invited to attend child protection conferences, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies), will represent the academy and/or identify the most appropriate trained member of staff to provide information relevant to child protection conference (initial/review).

Supporting Children

Catcote Academy recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Catcote Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The academy, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

As an Operation Encompass partner, we work closely with the Operation Encompass Lead with regards to domestic violence incidents and offer wellbeing checks to our students if we are contacted following an incident which has occurred in one of our student's homes.

Catcote Academy also recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer/child on child abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be investigated and dealt with appropriately as part of the academy's zero tolerance approach to unacceptable behaviour. No peer on peer/child on child abuse should be tolerated or minimised as part of growing up and <u>all</u> those involved will be provided with an appropriate level of support. It is understood that those students who have experienced abuse in their own lives may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. See *Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse Policy* (addendum to this policy) for detailed information.

Therefore, Catcote Academy will endeavour to support all its students through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, self-protection.

- The academy ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all student's and adults a sense of being respected and valued.

- Approaches which allow children and young people to develop critical thinking, literacy skills and digital literacy skills.

- A curriculum which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain.

- A curriculum where children develop personal resilience, understand and can take appropriate risk. This can include topics covered as part of Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education as well as Fundamental British Values and the SMSC Curriculum which cover harm, abuse, positive and healthy relationships and crime.

- A whole academy approach to online safety that considers the four areas of risk: Content; being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-semitism, radicalisation and extremism. Contact; being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial and other purposes. Conduct; personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying. Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

- A coherent *Ready to Learn Policy* and a *Physical Restrictive Intervention Policy.*

- Liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents.

- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's interest to do so.

- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in all safeguarding situations.

Catcote Academy recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. Academy staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. Academy staff must give consideration to children who are subject to an education health and care plan or have a medical condition, as these can mask safeguarding issues and may often be attributed to the medical condition rather than that a child may be being harmed. Concerns such as changes in behaviour and presentation (both physical and mental), mood or injury must be considered for each individual child and their own circumstances and must not be dismissed. Children with SEND and certain medical conditions are often more prone to peer group isolation than other children and there is greater potential for children with SEND and certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs. Therefore, time must be taken to ensure that the full circumstances of any child who has additional needs and requires support around language and communication is shared at the point of referral to ensure the best possible outcome for the child is always achieved and their voice through any form of communication is always heard. To address these additional challenges, the academy should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND and certain medical conditions.

The academy also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health issues children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

This policy MUST be read in conjunction with other related academy policies.

These include:

- Safer Recruitment Policy

- Code of conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concerns) Policy

- Readiness to Learn Policy

- Restrictive intervention Policy

- Anti-Bullying Policy

- On-line Safety Policy

- Acceptable User Policy

- Social Media Policy

- Remote learning Policy

- GDPR Policy

- Data Protection Policy

- Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy.

- Educational Visits Policy

- Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse Policy.

- Medical Conditions & Medical Procedures Policy

- Attendance Policy

- Children Missing in Education Policy

- Complaints Policy

- Allegation of Abuse against Staff Policy

- Whistle Blowing Policy

- Looked After Children Policy

- Intimate Personal Care Policy

- Equality & Diversity Policy

- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

- Relationship and Sex education (RSE) Policy

Definitions / Abbreviations

Term	Meaning
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DBS	Disclosure Barring Service
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
EEA	European economic area
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HBV	Honour Based Violence
HR	Human Resources
IICSA	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCOs	Special Education Needs Co-ordinators
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SPOC	Single point of contact
VEMT Lead	Vulnerable, exploited, missing, trafficked

This policy has been informed by the following legislation and national & local guidance

Children Act 1989/2004
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents

CP Safer Referral Form
https://www.teescpp.org.uk/forms/safer-referral-form/

Data Protection Act 2018
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted

DfE Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Sept 2021
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

Education Act 2002 Section 175

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made

Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/en/ukpga/2021/16/enacted

Equality Act 2010
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance

General Data Protection Regulations, 2018
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules_en

Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice

Freedom of Information Act 2000
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga_20000036_en.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/728/made

Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-schools-england

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents

School attendance: Guidance for schools
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance

Sexual Offences Act 2003
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents

Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership
https://www.hsscp.co.uk/

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Working together to safeguard children HM GOV (2018)

This Policy will be reviewed annually or in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance. This policy will be updated by the academy at any time that local solutions such as front door services in social care or the DO details change. This policy may also be amended following the annual review with staff where the academy's procedures or practices may change following whole staff discussion or training, to ensure it is the most effective policy in keeping our children safe.

This policy has been ratified by Trustees

Academic Year	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy /deputies	Senior Board lead Safeguarding Trustee
2022	Gillian Durkin	Anne Johnson Lisa Greig Lyn Younger Emma Straker	Gillian Fletcher

Last updated: February 2022

Date of next review: September 2023

Abuse or Safeguarding Issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Abuse	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	DfE advice
	Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance	Home Office (HO)
	Faith based abuse: National Action Plan	DfE advice
	Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody	Home Office website
	Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy	Home Office Policy Paper
	Together we can stop child sexual abuse	HM Government campaign
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE advice
Children missing from education, home or care	Children missing education	DfE statutory guidance
	Child missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance
	Children and adults missing strategy	Home Office strategy
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service
Child Exploitation	Trafficking: safeguarding children	DfE and HO guidance
	Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children	DfE statutory guidance
	Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims	HO statutory guidance
Drugs	Drug Strategy 2017	Home Office strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website
	Drug and Alcohol education – teacher guidance & evidence review	PSHE Association website
(so called) "Honour Based Abuse" including FGM and forced marriage	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office guidance
	Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH and HO statutory guidance

	fmu@fcdo.gov.uk	Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) statutory guidance
	FGM resource pack	HM Government guidance
Health and Well-being	Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children	DfE, DH, HO
	Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience	Public Health England
	Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE advice
Homelessness	Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government guidance
Private Fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE statutory guidance
Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers	DfE advice
	Educate Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office advice
	Prevent for FE and Training	Education and Training Foundation (ETF)
Violence	Serious violence strategy	Home Office Strategy
	Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention	Home Office
	Youth Endowment Fund	Home Office
	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges	Home Office advice
	Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy	Home Office strategy
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office guidance
	Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges	DfE advice

Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse Policy

Introduction

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 states that *'Governing Bodies and Proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.'* Furthermore, *'Where there is a safeguarding concern, Governing Bodies, Proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.'*

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (peer on peer/child on child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of the academy and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer /child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in our academy it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important that if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer /child on child abuse they should speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies).

This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and a safe educational environment for all children.

All staff must ensure that they reassure any victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Peer on peer/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 peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);

- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include and online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes 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 them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Sexting (known as youth produced sexual imagery) 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).

(KCSIE 2021)

At Catcote Academy we are committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of peer on peer/child on child abuse.
In particular ensuring that our academy setting staff protect our children by, wherever possible being aware of the nature and level of risk that children are exposed to, having a clear and comprehensive strategy specific to that child's safeguarding context and having a whole academy setting safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to peer on peer/child on child abuse. This policy is preventative in its response to peer on peer/child on child abuse by raising awareness of issues, supporting staff in identifying them with children, and providing appropriate response and intervention that is followed consistently across the whole academy workforce. This policy will also encourage parents to share information about any risk of harm to their child and be clear on the academy's setting's expectations of how this will be managed. (Farrer and Co. 2019)

This policy will be updated annually.

Purpose and Aim
'*Research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of peer-on-peer abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by peers, parents or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers' (Farrer and Co, 2019)*
Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer/child on child abuse. The purpose of this policy is to explore the many forms of peer on peer/child on child abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.
At Catcote Academy we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

Child Protection Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Online Safety Policy
Acceptable Use Policy
Data Protection Policy
Children Missing from Education Policy
Ready to Learn Policy
Restrictive Intervention Policy

Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is Working Together To Safeguarding Children 2018, highlighting that every assessment of a child, should '*reflect the unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context'* (Working Together To Safeguard Children, 2018:28). This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools/colleges and settings to hear the voice of the child and to be mindful of the contexts children live in.

At Catcote Academy we are committed to the following described preventative strategies to protect and support children from peer on peer/child on child abuse.

Preventative Strategies for Schools and Settings

Recognition

For all schools, colleges and settings, it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer/child on child abuse rather than only manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, and most importantly for schools/colleges and settings is recognition that peer on peer/child on child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms and that even if incidents are not being reported it does not mean that they are not happening. In which case, it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff. This involves staff analysing any incidents for trends, patterns and identifying any areas around the setting that may appear to be 'less safe'. Staff should also have access to regular CPD and training to ensure a consistent approach to managing peer on peer/child on child issues. 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. (KCSIE, 2021).

School Culture and Ethos and 'Zero-Tolerance' Approach

For all schools, colleges and settings a 'zero-tolerance' approach to abuse, harm or bullying between peers should be clearly expressed in the school's ethos and values. It should be made clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated and never passed

off as 'banter'. This means that all staff must challenge physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. By not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying some behaviours related to abuse it can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe educational environment and a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Therefore, a whole school approach is needed as part of preventative education. (Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges, 2021)

A Safe Environment to Share Concerns Alongside a Positive Curriculum
As stated above it is therefore important that each school/setting has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This can be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced-based and discriminatory behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another.

To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce and Governing Body feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice. Staff must also feel enabled to discuss issues about online access and support and reinforce appropriate behaviours online including understanding why age limits are in place on social media platforms, encouraging children to share online concerns, talking about issues that have happened in an open forum and working closely with parents. (Farrer and Co, 2019)

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. (KCSIE, 2021)

It is important that a clear *Online Safety Policy & Acceptable Use Policy* gives clarity and expectations to children about their role in keeping themselves and their peers safe in regards to the use of technology both inside and outside of school.

Forums for Children to Make Changes/Have Their Voice Heard

It is useful to ensure young people are part of changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within schools. At Catcote we have a school council which encourages our learners to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. This contributes towards creating a positive ethos.

Partnership Working

Multi agency working can consolidate in house procedures in schools/settings. By accessing advice, support and guidance, effective decisions can be made in collaboration to improve outcomes for children who may be at risk of harm. Seeking advice and guidance can act as a preventative measure so that the right course of action is taken at the earliest opportunity. It is also necessary that the school/setting actively refers concerns/allegations of peer on peer/child on child abuse where necessary to front door services/children's social care and the police where appropriate. This is particularly important because peer on peer/child on child abuse can be a complex issue, and even more so where wider safeguarding concerns exist. It is often not appropriate for one single agency (where the incident cannot be managed internally) to try to address the issue alone – it requires effective partnership working (Farrer and Co. 2019).

Schools which excel at tackling bullying (and peer on peer/child on child abuse) have created an ethos of good behaviour where student treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. Values of respect for staff and other student, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older student who set a good example to the rest. (Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017).

What is Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse?

For these purposes, peer on peer/child on child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships and wider peer associations. Peer on peer/child on child abuse can take various forms, including: bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), intimate relationship abuse between peers, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos, upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (KCSIE, 2021). It may also involve gang related behaviours, including serious violence and county lines. Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to peer on peer/child on child abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of peer on peer/child on child abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences. This can be done by adopting a Contextual

Safeguarding approach and by ensuring that our response to incidents of peer-on-peer/child on child abuse takes into account any potential complexity (Farrer and Co. 2019).

Abusive behaviour can happen to student in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm. This means adopting a **whole school community approach** by ensuring all staff: are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments (KCSIE, 2021), understand how a child's wider context may have impact on them; contribute to creating a strong safeguarding culture in school by following policies that address peer on peer/child on child abuse and harmful attitudes; promote healthy relationships and attitudes to gender/sexuality; support the school by identifying 'less safe' areas in school; access training on bias and stereotyped assumptions; be alert to changes in children's behaviour and seek appropriate responses to concerns shared. (Farrer and Co, 2019)

Research suggests that peer on peer/child on child abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse affecting children in the UK (Farrer and Co, 2019). Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Research suggests that peer on peer/child on child abuse may affect boys differently from girls, and that this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make-up. It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but all peer on peer/child on child abuse must be taken seriously (KCSIE, 2021). Barriers to disclosure will also be different. As a result, schools need to explore the gender dynamics of peer on peer/child on child abuse within their settings and recognise that these will play out differently in single sex, mixed or gender imbalanced environments (Farrer and Co. 2019).
It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

Children with Special Educational Needs
Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:
- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges, schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND or certain medical conditions particularly when investigating any form of peer on peer/child on child abuse. (KCSIE, 2021)

Language

For the purposes of this policy the language used will refer to 'victims' and *alleged* perpetrators, this is to ensure that children are not given 'labels' about their behaviour unfairly and without any full and thorough conclusive investigation. This is also so that victims understand and they will always be believed, supported, listened to and taken seriously. The language used to children and parents in the reporting of any incidents that may have occurred could impact on any future rehabilitation of children and young people following any investigations that may occur. The use of certain words can be both inflammatory and distressing for children and their parents, so care should be taken in the discussion of incidents with parents.

Types of Abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

Bullying (including Cyberbullying, Prejudice-Based and Discriminatory Bullying)

The new definition of bullying is, 'a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those who they perceive as vulnerable'. (Taken from the Oxford, Cambridge and Collins dictionary, updated 2018)

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

(Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017)

Cyber Bullying

Cyber or online bullying is the use of phones; instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This means that some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images; consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. (KCSIE, 2021)

It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing sexual images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the academy will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

Prejudiced-Based and Discriminatory Bullying

The term prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both and online, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

Abuse in Intimate Personal Relationships Between Peers

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abuser uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

Physical Abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand

why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidently before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual. B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college. In referencing sexual harassment, it is in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment (KCSIE 2021).

Sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as; telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual 'jokes' or taunting;
- Physical behaviour, such as; deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is

important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos;
- Sharing of unwanted explicit content
- Upskirting;
- Sexualised online bullying;
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. They can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Schools and colleges should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated by factors outside the school or college, including intimate personal relationships. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Staff should be aware that is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. (Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, 2021)

Causing Someone to Engage in Sexual Activity Without Consent
This includes forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party. (see above definition)

Consensual and Non-Consensual Sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes Images and/or Videos
This is also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery. 'Youth Involved/Produced' includes children sharing images that they, or another child, have created themselves.
'Imagery' covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the policy).
Sexting (more commonly known as) is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can

occur in any relationship, to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Upskirting
'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. It can include activities involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include and online element.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour
Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. The umbrella term is 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB). Harmful Sexual Behaviour can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. When considering Harmful Sexual Behaviour, ages and stages of development of children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, e.g. the child is disabled, or smaller in stature.

Harmful sexual behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in harmful sexual behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Harmful sexual behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual

language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another, sexual assault, rape or abuse.

Measuring the Behaviour

Simon Hackett's continuum of behaviour (taken from Farrer and Co. 2017) can be a useful guide to measure the behaviour that has occurred and consider the circumstances around the incident (s).

The continuum looks at whether it:

- is socially acceptable
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- is socially acceptable within the peer group
- is problematic and concerning
- involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- involves an element of coercion or pre-planning
- involves a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power
- involves a misuse of power

Behaviour which is not abusive at first may potentially become abusive quickly or over time. Intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour which may be displayed by a child is vital and could potentially prevent their behaviour from progressing on a continuum to become problematic, abusive and/or violent - and ultimately requiring (greater/more formal) engagement with specialist external and/or statutory agencies.

Expected Action Taken From All Staff

All staff should be alert to the well-being of children and young people and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by peer on peer/child on child abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ (Farrer and Co. 2019).

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and alleged perpetrator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

Firstly, all staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. It is important for all staff to deal with a situation of peer on peer/child on child abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get a true, accurate account of the facts around what has happened, so that nothing is forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

Staff should also be mindful that wider safeguarding concerns may influence the child's account of the event(s). Alongside this peer pressure and the impact of sharing information about the incident(s) may also influence a child's account.

Gather the Facts
In cases specifically relating to sexual violence and sexual harassment, part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021 states that two members of staff (preferably one being the Designated Safeguarding Lead) should be present to manage the report, *where possible*. **Staff should not view or forward illegal images of a child and instead confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to police for inspection.**
The most appropriate member of staff with the best relationship with the child should be the person alongside the child who wishes to disclose wherever possible. However, staff should always be aware that children may choose to disclose to any member of staff that they feel most comfortable with and therefore all staff need basic training in managing disclosures. In any circumstance the member of staff must make clear to the child that they cannot maintain confidentiality if what is being shared has put or will put the child or another person at risk of harm. Staff must also be aware that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse.
In all circumstances, staff need to speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. This involves listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed and not asking leading questions. This means only interrupting the young person to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)
Then, a full and clear record of exactly what the young person has said in their own language should be made (and no individual interpretation of the facts made which could impact on the disclosure) after the child has finished the disclosure, so the child feels listened to and stored following each academy's own recording protocols (on CPOMs).

Consider the Intent (Begin to Risk Assess)
Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

Decide on Your Next Course Of Action
If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). **This action would, in most circumstances, be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding leads)** but in the event of their absence the referral can be

made by another member of staff. If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

If social care and the police intend to pursue this further they may ask to interview the young people in the academy or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

Informing Parents

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. Parents would not be informed if by doing so the child was put at further risk of significant harm.

If a young person is deemed to be 'Gillick Competent' following the 'Fraser' guidelines and does not wish you to share the information with parents, then the school must consider this especially for example if the young person is pregnant and this is why they are being bullied (unless this has occurred through significant harm in which case a criminal/social care case is likely or the young person is under the age of 13).

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the academy should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent or even with them (they may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in any way). Where the academy can evidence they are acting in the best interests of the young person they would not be criticised, however this would be the case if they actively breached the rights and choices of the young person.

The best way to inform parents is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

Points to Consider:
The wishes and feelings of the victim
It is important to understand how the victim wants to proceed to allow as much control as is reasonably possible over the decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed.

The Nature of the Alleged Incident
This includes consideration as to whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behaviour has been displayed.

What is the Age and Development of the Children Involved?
How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children

under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following)). Any imbalance of power and control must be considered.

Are There Any Additional Vulnerabilities?
Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Therefore care must be taken to ascertain any changes in mood or behaviour without attributing that to the child's condition. Every effort must be made to overcome barriers to communication and ensure the voice of the child is heard.

Where Did the Incident or Incidents Take Place?
Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

What Was the Explanation by all Children Involved of What Occurred?
Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

What is Each of the Children's Own Understanding of What Occurred?
Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?
In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care.

Repetition
Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

Ongoing Risks
Are there any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school, college or other setting staff?

Contextual Safeguarding/Extra Familial Harm
Is there any other related or wider context involving the child, including any links to child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation?

Outcomes
The outcome of the investigation will follow your local threshold guidance. Therefore, either a referral has been made to either the police/social care for

a full investigation (tier 4). It may have resulted in Children's Services undertaking a further assessment (Tier 3) or as a school/setting you may have identified additional services/intervention that are non-statutory and in which case completed an early help assessment (Tier 2). It may be that on investigation, a decision has been made to handle the incident (s) internally, in which case the school may implement a risk assessment plan (Tier 1).

In any of the above outcomes the acadmey has a duty of care to manage the education needs of both children/young people in which case a risk assessment plan may be needed irrespective of the outcome.

Next Steps

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

For the Young Person Who Has Been Harmed (Victim)

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or pathway group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of Relationship / Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education, PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in the academy so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

For the Young Person Who Has Displayed Harmful Behaviour (Alleged Perpetrator)

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that the young person is supported to understand the inappropriateness of these behaviour. This may be through the curriculum, one to one Thrive sessions, or support from external agencies (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation

has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

After Care
It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

Safety Planning
Safety planning is a positive way of supporting a child who may benefit from a planned approach; this may be either the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator. Safety plans support the child by considering the behaviours that may be risky and plan ways to manage triggers and to seek support from adults and peers. They are inclusive of parents and staff and are a planned intervention to support young people in feeling secure in the academy setting, helping young people identify behaviours that may leave them feeling anxious or at risk and have strategies that they can apply to keep themselves feeling safe. The language of safety planning is more positive than risk assessment and can give security to the child that a joined-up approach is being followed by all in the academy.

Disciplinary Action
Finally, and in some circumstances, the academy may need to consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any child/children involved – any such action should address the abuse, the causes of it, and attitudes underlying it. Disciplinary action may sometimes be appropriate, including (a) to ensure that the child/children take(s) responsibility for and realise(s) the seriousness of their behaviour; (b) to demonstrate to the child/children and others that peer on peer/child on child abuse can never be tolerated; and (c) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of other children. However, these considerations must be balanced against the child's/children's own potential unmet needs and any safeguarding concerns. Before deciding on appropriate action the academy will always consider its duty to safeguard all children from harm; the underlying reasons for a child's behaviour; any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the child; the risk that the child may pose to other children; and the severity of the peer on peer/child on child abuse and the causes of it.

Catcote Academy will, where appropriate, consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognising that even if this is ultimately deemed to be necessary, some of the measures referred to in this policy may still be required. Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the other children in the school. (Farrer and Co. 2019).

This policy has been heavily supported by the key document:
Farrer and Co: Peer on Peer Abuse Toolkit 2019.
https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/news-articles/downloads/peer-on-peer-abuse-toolkit-14.pdf

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Catcote Academy's Child Protection Policy and the Local safeguarding partnership arrangements.

This policy template has been developed and supported by the following:

DFE: Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

DFE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for CEO, staff and governing bodies. July 2017
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

DFE: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges. September 2021
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, December 2020
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609874/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf