



BISHOP WINNINGTON-INGRAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

A community that gives each child an outstanding spiritual, academic and practical education and instils an awareness of the overflowing joy, love and peace that comes from God's love for us, so that they are able to achieve their potential and truly experience 'life in all its fulness.' John 10:10

SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE

Date policy accepted by the Governing Body:	Autumn 2025
Date for review:	Autumn 2026

**SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE:
A Reminder**



CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

**Confidential information about pupils must not be taken home or accessed remotely
September 2025**

If you suspect abuse, a pupil confides in you, or a complaint is made about any adult or about yourself, it is **your duty** to report the concern.

If a child tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, without asking any leading questions – do not ask child to write down any statement
2. Offer immediate understanding and reassurance, while passing no judgement
3. Advise that you will try and support **but that you must pass the information on – YOU CANNOT KEEP IT A SECRET**
4. **Immediately** tell the Safeguarding Team –use reporting system CPOMS
5. Write up your notes on the system
6. Continue to support the child

The Stronger Families Hub is the new one stop shop for all Early Help **AND** Safeguarding referrals (One referral, one phone number, one email)

All referrals are made by completing the Early Help Assessment via the portal here - [Children Young People and Families Online Service \(hillington.gov.uk\)](https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families-online-service)

All child protection referrals should be made via telephone (and then followed up in writing via the Early Help Assessment the same day)

The contact number for the Hub is now **01895 556006** and the email is strongerfamilieshub@hillington.gov.uk

This replaces the previous MASH contact details.

Inform school this has taken place as soon as possible

If you raise a concern on CPOMS and no one sees you within the hour, go and find one of them in person to make sure they have received the message

**Time is very important – please do not wait until the end of the day
– by 3 p.m. that child could be going home to a very dangerous situation**

You must refer; you must not investigate

Designated Persons for Safeguarding –

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Claire Stangroom – Partnership Pastoral & Designated Safeguarding Manager Clare Rodenas – Head of School
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Lisa Stone – Assistant Head Teacher Andrew Blake – Assistant Head Teacher Siobhan Morgan - SENCO

SAFEGUARDING is EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY

Please read ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ DfE Sept 2025 Part 1 and

Annex A carefully

Also read School SG Policy, Behaviour Policy and Staff Conduct Policy

What to do if:

If you have to contact Children's Services directly yourself to refer a concern:

1. Contact Hillingdon MASH <https://hillingdonsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/professionals/useful-guidance/mash/> or 01895 556 633
2. Inform SG team this has taken place as soon as possible

What happens next:

1. MASH decide on appropriate action
2. First Response Team investigate
3. Complete a Section 17 investigation – Child in Need – support for child and family or
4. Complete Section 47 enquiry – possible criminal offence – Child Protection Plan – support for child and family
5. Emergency Police Protection – if necessary to remove child from place of harm for limited period of time
6. Care Proceedings – very rare

Early Help

Everyone being alert to any issues and then accessing internal and / or external support for a young person before the issues grow and they become at significant risk of harm

Those young people at significant risk and need of Early Help :

is disabled and has specific additional needs;

- *has special educational needs;*
- *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 misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;*
- *Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;*
- *is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;*
- *has returned home to their family from care;*
- *is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;*
- *is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;*
- *is a privately fostered child.*

Child Protection - Keeping a child safe from significant harm

Safeguarding – Keeping all children safe –

4 principles underlying Safeguarding:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's **mental and physical health** or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Categories of Abuse:

Physical

Emotional

Sexual

Neglect

SAFEGUARDING

Designated Officers for Safeguarding

(These are the staff to which anybody who has a concern about a student's well-being or safety will refer immediately. These Designated Staff will then make the decision about appropriate action and this maybe a referral to Children's Services)

Designated Governor for Safeguarding – Danny Gallup

Policy – Safeguarding policy incorporating Child Protection Policy is on website – please read

DfE guidance – '**Keeping children safe in education' Sept 2025** – all staff given headline booklet in Sept 2025 – please read

Also read School SG policy, Behaviour Policy and Staff Conduct Policy

All training materials and documents on CPOMS

MASH referral form (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

For students who are in need of support from more than one agency and to co-ordinate information and support by the completion of a MASH referral form – if concerns about CP or need to access Early Help to prevent issues in future



Police Protection Order

Section 47 investigation – criminal offence may have taken place

Section 17 investigation – Child in Need

School based intervention

Early Help

Child Protection Plans

Students are at risk of harm undergo a Section 47 investigation (joint police and social care investigation) and this may result in the student being placed on a **Child Protection Plan (Core groups every 6 weeks and Case Conference after 3 months then every 6 months)**

If the risk is not so great the student may be subject to a Section 17 investigation and then deemed to be a **Child in Need (CIN)** and placed on a Child in Need Plan according to the thresholds used by Children's Services (CIN Meeting every 3 months)

Staff are informed about students on Child Protection Plans on a need-to-know basis only. Head of school and SG Team have the full details, HoYs, Year Team Assistant and tutors are given some background as are some staff on a strictly need to know basis.

Vulnerable groups of students

- *Students on Child Protection Plans / Children in Need*
- *Looked After Children*
- *Adopted Children*
- *Traveller Children*
- *Young Carers*
- *SEN students*
- *Students with disabilities*
- *Students with medical conditions*
- *Refugees / Asylum seekers*
- *Pupil with a social worker*

Physical Intervention – Reasonable Force

We have a duty of care to prevent any student harming themselves or others, but not if this puts us at risk of harm or the student. We must however be proactive in stopping any such actions e.g. getting help, talking to a student etc.

If intervention is necessary – it must be 'reasonable' and 'proportional.' **See Reasonable Force Policy**

If a member of staff does have to intervene – they must talk through their actions with a member of the SG team and possibly fill out a Physical Intervention form. It may be reported to the LA to ensure transparency

Safer Recruitment

- There must be a Single Central Register in school
- Short listing of candidates needs to be carried out between the HOD and a staff member who has completed Safer Recruitment training (usually SLT Line Manager) and ensure that a short-listing grid is used.
- Interview panel to consist of a least one member of staff who has completed SR training and should be at least two members of staff. Consideration given as to whether it is appropriate for a student panel to be involved.
- Any verbal offer subject to satisfactory references and DBS check
- All staff must be DBS checked – visitors spending regular time with students must provide proof of DBS – seen and checked by HR Manager
- Volunteers in school must fill out official paperwork – HR risk assess need for enhanced DBS check
- Governors, Head of school, SLT and HoDs must be s128 (prohibition to manage) checked

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation – report any concerns to SG team –

- CLITORIDECTOMY - removal of the clitoral hood with or without the removal of the clitoris
- EXCISION - removal of the clitoris and partial or total removal of the vaginal lips
- INFIBULATION - removal of the clitoris, vaginal lips and the stitching of the vagina, leaving a 1-2cm opening
- Piercing the clitoris, cauterisation, cutting the vagina, inserting corrosive substances, stretching of the vaginal lips.....

Mandatory duty to report any known incident of FGM to the police

- *FGM is supported because it is a traditional practice that has existed in a community for generations. Many communities believe that:*
- *a girl needs to be cut in order to marry well.*
- *a girl who is not cut is seen as unclean and sexually promiscuous.*
- *a girl who is cut will make a good marriage because she is thought to be cleaner, healthier, more fertile. She will be a virgin until her wedding night (as she is sealed closed).*
- *even if parents understand the dangers and negative health impacts of cutting their daughter, they may still choose to do so as they perceive the benefits as outweighing the disadvantages.*
- *Pressure to conform to a social norm*
- *A cultural tradition*
- *Necessary part of raising a girl properly*
- *FGM removes the ‘unclean’ and ‘male’ parts of the genitalia resulting in a ‘clean’ and ‘beautiful’ woman*
- *Meant to stem any sexual desires*
- *Assurance that the girl is a virgin when married*
- *Indicators - FGM maybe about to happen...*
- *Family from a practicing community;*
- *Extended holiday, particularly to a practicing country;*
- *Child is going to “become a woman” or have a “special celebration”;*
- *Child may begin to display a behavioural change*

Breast Ironing / Breast Flattening

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem ‘child-like’ for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse. Breast ironing does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the ‘ironing’ can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer

'Honour' based abuse (HBA) is a form of domestic abuse which is perpetrated in the name of ‘so called **honour**'.

The **honour** code which it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives and women who do not abide by the 'rules' are then punished for bringing shame on the family. **FGM, Forced Marriage and Breast Ironing / Flattening** are all types of abuse included in ‘so called honour-based’ abuse (HBA)

Ensuring students are safe on school site

- *All visitors sign in at Reception and wear named Visitor badges*
- *1 point of entry only during school hours – buzzer system*
- *All staff wear ID badges*
- *All supply staff and volunteers read and sign SG and Staff Conduct policy at start of their day in school*
- *CCTV cameras and staff on duty at break time, lunchtimes and after school*

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF – any concern about the behaviour of a member of staff must be reported immediately to the EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER (not SG Team) or the Head of School in her absence

This will then be reported to the LADO - the Local Authority Designated Officer and they would instigate an investigation involving Police, HR, Lead Officer CP

SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS show most failings in SG due to: Failure to act soon enough - Poor record keeping - Failure to listen to the child - Failure to reassess - Sharing information too slowly - Lack of challenge to inaction

The Equality Act 2010 – the Act protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society and covers – **age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity**. These are called **protected characteristics**

PVE – Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalisation – report any concerns to Rachel Blake (EHT)

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism

“The Prevent duty” – DfE 2015 – **mandatory duty to report** such concerns and refer to Channel programme

- *“Extremism” is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations*
- *‘Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, causes serious damage to property, or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause’*
- *Schools can also build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, schools should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments*
- *Staff should be alert to changes in behaviour and act proportionality – this may be DSL referring to Prevent.*

British Values

- *democracy.*
- *the rule of law.*
- *individual liberty.*
- *mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.*

Mental Health

Pupils: We promote positive mental health in our pupils and to identify and address those with less severe problems at an early stage and build their resilience. We recognise that this may be an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation. We are also committed to identifying and supporting pupils with more severe needs and to help make appropriate referrals to specialist agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) TIER 3 where necessary. Concerns should be reported to DSL immediately

Parental Mental Health: We recognise that some parents with mental health issues may experience difficulties at times with their parenting responsibilities. We are committed to supporting such families and will endeavour to identify those who would benefit from early help from local services and work with them to avoid any adverse impact on their children.

Children Missing Education- CME

LA must be informed when a school is about to remove a child from roll under one of prescribed categories or is considering taking a student off roll due to non-attendance and must make reasonable enquiries jointly with LA to establish the whereabouts of the student. If a child is missing from 10 days or more the LA must be informed.

Indicator of abuse / neglect, possible FGM

Children with Disabilities or Special Educational Needs

We ensure that children with disabilities or special educational needs have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve the same outcomes as non-disabled children. We recognise that disabled children do however require additional action because they can experience greater vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairments.

Private Fostering arrangements – must be reported to SG team

If we become aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, where a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by someone to whom they are not related in that person's home, they should raise this in the first instance with the designated senior person for child protection. We will notify the local authority of the circumstances, and the local authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

Looked After Children – LAC / CLA and Previously Looked After Children – PLAC

A Looked After Child (sometimes referred to as 'LAC') is a child who is **Accommodated** by the local authority (under Section 20 of 1989 Children's Act – voluntary care as parents must agree), or a child who is the subject to an **Interim Care Order**, full **Care Order** or **Emergency Protection Order**; or a child who is remanded by a court into local authority accommodation

Children with Medical Needs

See individual plans and separate policy

Sect 100 of Children and Families Act 2014 legal duty on schools to put in place arrangements to allow pupils with medical needs to participate in school activities

PEER on PEER HARMS

Bullying – physical - hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm

Bullying – mental / emotional e.g. name-calling, isolating

Bullying – cyberbullying e.g. social media, texting etc

Sexting – The term ‘sexting’ is derived from texting and refers to the sending of sexually provocative material (including photos, videos and sexually explicit text) from modern communication devices or applications, such as mobile phones, tablets, email, social networking sites and instant messaging services.

Under British law it is illegal and a serious criminal offence to take, hold or share ‘sexual’ photos of anyone aged under 18.

Youth Produced Imagery – sexual images produced by those under 18 – illegal to have such images – UKCIS guidance on managing such images – **‘Aggravated’ (predatory) or ‘Experimental’ (accidental, one-off mistake)**

Staff must not view images – this could result in a referral to the LADO as by viewing the images, you may have viewed sexual images of a child = illegal

- pass concerns to SG team immediately – they will inform the police if necessary

‘Upskirting’ involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 this carries a maximum 2-year sentence – any gender

E Safety Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation- technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

We will follow and implement the recommendations of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE Sept 2025

) and Teaching Online Safety in School (DfE, Jan 2023)- Guidance supporting schools to teach their pupils how to stay safe online, within new and existing school subject Where children are being asked to work more at home online, we have issued advice to children and parents / carers and follow the DfE guidance: Safeguarding and remote learning. We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors
- All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training to include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems. The Head Teacher will take overall responsibility.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting on teaching and learning
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place to meet safeguarding needs Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following 4 categories of risk as identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025:
- Content -being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as pressure from another child(ren), commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse is a safeguarding and child protection issue. Any child or young person who has been witness to or involved in incidents of domestic abuse will have suffered a degree of trauma, likely to be at risk of emotional damage and / or physical injury.

The cross- government definition of domestic abuse is; any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse **between those aged over 16 or over who are**, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. **The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional**

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse

occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/ or violence occurs between family members can have a serious and long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in the school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school have up to date information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to need.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day, on 0800 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for call can be booked



CHILD EXPLOITATION – CSE and CCE

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION - CCE

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity:

- in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and / or
- through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim maybe criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.

CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology – e.g. money laundering

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (County Lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket or to threaten other young people

It can occur as:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Forced Marriage | Forced criminality | Organ harvesting | Debt bondage | Domestic servitude |
| | Labour exploitation | | Financial exploitation | |

Indicators::

- Pupils who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Pupils who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Pupils who suffer from changes in emotional well being
- Pupils who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Pupils who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Pupils who regularly miss school
- Hanging out with someone older
- Being angry, aggressive and violent
- Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive
- Making more calls / texts possibly on new phone
- Unexplained injuries and refusing medical help
- Committing petty crimes like shoplifting or vandalism

County Lines

refers to drug distribution from city to country and seaside areas using children and vulnerable people using dedicated mobile phone networks

County line gangs get children to deliver drugs around the county by using coercion, intimidation, debt bondage, violence, sexual violence and weapons. Prospective runners are recruited and groomed by other young people.

Gangs use children as they are cheaper, easier to control and less likely to be picked up / prosecuted by police.

Children are easily trapped as county lines gangs create drugs debts and threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims and their families if they try and leave the county lines network

What is meant by Going country?

It means the act of travelling to another city/town to deliver drugs or money.

What is meant by trapping?

The act of selling drugs. Trapping can refer to the act of moving drugs from one town to another or the act of selling drugs in one.

What is meant by a trap house?

A building used as a base from where drugs are sold (or sometimes manufactured). These houses usually are occupied by someone (usually adult drug users, a vulnerable person – SEN or OAP who have no say in home being taken over) and often young people are forced to stay in trap houses and work

What is meant by a trapline?

This refers to when someone owns a mobile phone specifically for the purpose of running and selling of drug.

What is meant by cuckooing?

This is when drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable individual (drug user, OAP, older person with learning difficulties) and use it as their base for selling/manufacturing drugs. Commonly, drug users are targeted and are offered "free" drugs in exchange.

Signs of cuckooing:

- Signs of drug use - more people coming in / out of property – more cars ./; bikes outside property – litter outside -- usual home occupier not seen so much as is anxious when seen

Money Mules-

Is a person (sometimes called a 'smurfer') who transfers money illegally in person, through a courier service or electronically on behalf of others or maybe asked to set up a bank account that is then used by criminal gangs.

Typically the 'mule' is paid with a small amount of the money transferred

'SQUARES' – Term for fraud

'LOADING' – Putting large amounts of money into people's accounts

'DEETS' – Short for details, usually referring to bank accounts

'RECEIPTS' – Using fraudulent receipts to gain refunds

Child Trafficking

is defined as the 'recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt' of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

National Referral Mechanism – all LAs have to refer concerns

Modern Slavery

someone forced to work though mental or physical threat. Owned and controlled by an employer though mental or physical abuse or threat of abuse. Dehumanised and treated as a commodity. Restrictions on freedom.

Modern Slavery Act 2015 and National Referral Mechanism – all LAs have to refer concerns

Ensuring students are safe on school site

- All visitors sign in at Reception and wear named Visitor badges
- 1 point of entry only during school hours – buzzer system
- All staff and students wear ID badges
- All supply staff and volunteers read and sign Staff Conduct policy at start of their day in school
- CCTV cameras and staff on duty at break time, lunchtimes and after school

What is grooming?

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Types of grooming

Children and young people can be groomed online, in person or both – by a stranger or someone they know. This could be a family member, a friend or someone who has targeted them – like a teacher, faith group leader or sports coach. When a child is groomed online, groomers may hide who they are by sending photos or videos of other people. Sometimes this'll be of someone younger than them to gain the trust of a "peer". They might target one child online or contact lots of children very quickly and wait for them to respond.

The relationship a groomer builds can take different forms. This could be:

- a romantic relationship
- as a mentor
- an authority figure
- a dominant and persistent figure.

A groomer can use the same sites, games and apps as young people, spending time learning about a young person's interests and use this to build a relationship with them. Children can be groomed online through:

- social media networks
- text messages and messaging apps, like WhatsApp
- email
- text, voice and video chats in forums, games and apps.

Whether online or in person, groomers can use tactics like:

- pretending to be younger
- giving advice or showing understanding
- buying gifts
- giving attention
- taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

Groomers might also try and isolate children from their friends and family, making them feel dependent on them and giving the groomer power and control over them. They might use blackmail to make a child feel guilt and shame or introduce the idea of 'secrets' to control, frighten and intimidate.

It's important to remember that children and young people may not understand they've been groomed. They may have complicated feelings, like loyalty, admiration, love, as well as fear, distress and confusion.

Signs of grooming

It can be difficult to tell if a child is being groomed – the signs aren't always obvious and may be hidden. Older children might behave in a way that seems to be "normal" teenage behaviour, masking underlying problems.

Some of the signs you might see include:

- being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online
- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- underage drinking or drug taking
- spending more or less time online or on their devices
- being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- sexualised behaviour, language or an understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age
- spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

Effects of grooming

Grooming can have both short and long-term effects. The impact of grooming can last a lifetime, no matter whether it happened in person, online or both.

A child or young person might have difficulty sleeping, be anxious or struggle to concentrate or cope with school work. They may become withdrawn, uncommunicative and angry or upset.

Children, young people and adults may live with:

- anxiety and depression
- eating disorders
- post-traumatic stress
- difficulty coping with stress
- self-harm
- suicidal thoughts
- sexually transmitted infections
- pregnancy
- feelings of shame and guilt
- drug and alcohol problems
- relationship problems with family, friends and partners.

Suspected Indecent Imagery Protocol

'Indecent' is not defined in legislation. For most purposes, if imagery (moving or still) contains a naked young person, a topless girl, and / or displays genitals or sex acts, including masturbation, then it will be considered indecent. Indecent images may also include overtly sexual images of young people in their underwear.

Confiscate it

Close it down

Report it

ALL STAFF

If you have reason to believe, **without looking**, that there is possibility that there are indecent images on a personal mobile device you must....

Always...

- Confiscate and secure the device (s)
- Inform the SG Team

Never....

- View the imagery (if viewed accidentally always report his)
- Send, share or save the mage anywhere
- Allow students to do any of the above once you know about the imagery
- Delete the imagery unless directed to do so by the DSL

If the imagery has been shared across the school network, a website or a social network;

Always...

- Block the network to all users and isolate the imagery
- Inform the DSL

Never...

- Send or print the image
- Move the material from one place to another
- View the image outside of the protocols in SG policy
- Delete the imagery unless directed to do so by DSL

Additionally never...

- Search the mobile device even in response to an allegation or disclosure if this is likely to cause additional stress to the young person UNLESS there is clear evidence to suggest that there is an immediate problem
- Print out any material for evidence
- Move any material from one storage device to another

DSL ACTIONS

The DSL may need to seek clarification of a disclosure or allegation after they have been made aware of the concern, but should not conduct an investigation. Full notes will be kept in the young person's CPOMS file. Seeking clarification may involve:

- Identifying, without looking, what the image contains and whether anyone else has been involved
- Finding out who has seen or shared the image and how further distribution can be prevented

The DSL must immediately refer to police and / or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN)
- What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
- You have reason to believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

FAILURE to FOLLOW THIS PROCEDURE COULD RESULT IN A REFERRAL TO the LADO

Anti-Bullying – See Separate Policy for more details

What is bullying?

“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.”

From the DfE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (2017)

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police, these include:

- Violence or assault;
- Theft;
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages, sexual harassment and peer on peer abuse;
- Hate crimes – any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone’s prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender. (Please refer to the Equality Policy and Objectives).

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that happens online. online bullying can follow a child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile apps. It is important to be vigilant and combat cyberbullying as more young people spend more of their time online.

Cyberbullying can include:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Apps

Here are some examples of the main apps that young people are currently using (all of these have a minimum age limit of at least 13):

Some you may have heard of: YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp.

And some you may not have heard of:



Ask.fm

This site lets people ask, give, and get answers to questions, all anonymously. The Q&A format offers a unique way of chatting, but also a great opportunity for bullies to anonymously reach teens online.

Houseparty

The concept of the Houseparty app is similar to that of a real houseparty - an opportunity for teenagers to commune in groups and socialise through live online video chats. Group chats can consist of two to eight people at a time. As the group video chats are live, it can be difficult to monitor what is said or shown on screen, which can be especially detrimental for young users depending on the direction of the conversation.

Live.me

As with any live streaming platform, there's a huge risk that children and adolescents may be exposed to inappropriate content. Live.me allows its users to broadcast themselves in live videos and watch live videos broadcasted by other users, and also gives them the opportunity to earn virtual currency from their viewers. People using the app can be contacted by any others who've come across their content.



Kik Messenger

Kik Messenger allows its users to instantly message each other with ease. The app is free to use when using basic features, and there's no limit on the quantity of messages you can send. It's possible for users of Kik to chat to strangers if they've shared their Kik username with them. The app has been heavily criticised with regards to child safety.

Whisper

With the Whisper app, users can anonymously share "confessions", alongside an accompanying picture. As confessions on the app are anonymous, the content that young people using the app may come across can be quite disturbing and may impact their self-esteem.

Monkey

The whole idea behind the Monkey app is to converse with random strangers by sharing their Snapchat usernames. While users only communicate with strangers over video for 10 seconds at a time, there's no telling who people using the app may be matched with for a brief conversation. Before being matched with a stranger, you're provided with some information about them, including their age, gender and location. You can then decide whether or not you want to accept the chat or not.

Signs of bullying

No single sign will indicate for certain that a child's being bullied, but watch out for:

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

Effects of bullying

The effects of bullying can last into adulthood. At its worst, bullying has driven children and young people to self-harm and even suicide. Children who are bullied:

- may develop mental health problems like depression and anxiety
- have fewer friendships
- aren't accepted by their peers
- are wary and suspicious of others
- have problems adjusting to school, and don't do as well.
- All children who are affected by bullying can suffer harm – whether they are bullied, they bully others, or they witness bullying.