

# Grace Academy Coventry

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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## 1 Definitions

1.1 'Safeguarding' is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) as;

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

1.2 'Child Protection' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

1.3 'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

1.4 'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster carers.

1.5 'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Grace Academy Coventry

1.6 Within this policy, we use the term 'victim', although it is recognised that not everyone considers themselves to be a victim or would want to be described in this way. We also recognise the importance of not using the terminology of 'perpetrator' in relation to children in cases where the behaviour can be harmful to both parties. The appropriate use of terminology will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

1.7 'Hazing' is a ritual in which a new member of a club or group is humiliated or abused.

## 2 Introduction

2.1 We recognise that safeguarding and child protection and promoting the welfare of children is an essential part of our duty of care to all students. As such, all staff and governors have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is everyone's responsibility and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children. We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider what is in the best interests of each child in line and upholding the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

2.2 The purpose of this policy is to;

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate Grace Academy Coventry's commitment to keeping children safe;
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to Grace Academy Coventry's safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- Ensure that staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect;

- Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

2.3 Grace Academy Coventry is committed to the following principles;

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- All staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff take on a responsibility to promote children's welfare
- Providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

### 2.4 Safeguarding aims

2.4.1 The safeguarding aims of Grace Academy Coventry, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) are to;

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer abuse, exploitation or neglect and act to protect them;
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm;
- support children's mental health and wellbeing;
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues (including online safety) and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- have a designated safeguarding lead and designated deputies, who will provide support to staff, students and families;
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities or particular protected characteristics (LGBTQ+, etc); ;
- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information;
- ensure that everyone in Grace Academy Coventry understands the safeguarding procedures; and to
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.

2.5 This policy adheres to the following documents;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated 2022)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (May 2019)

- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings addendum \(April 2020\)](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#)
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges \(September 2021\)](#)

2.6 We continue to work closely with the Local Authority and the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership to safeguard children across the city.

2.7 Please note that there are a number of other documents (statutory and non-statutory) that inform our policy and practice. A list of these can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

2.8 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

- GA – Attendance and Children Missing in Education Policy
- TLT - Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy
- GA - Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy
- GA - Anti-Bullying Policy
- TLT- Code of Conduct for all Staff
- GA - Student Behaviour Policy
- GA - Digital Policy and Procedures
- TLT - Whistle Blowing Policy
- GA - Relationships Sex and Health Education Policy

Links to these policies can be found in Appendix A and on Grace Academy Google Drive, GAC - Policies.

## 2.9 Scope

2.9.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Grace Academy Coventry (including the Tove Learning Trust). All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

2.9.2 Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) in this policy, it should be understood that Grace Academy Coventry will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

## 3 Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 The Role of the Governing Body and/or Proprietors

3.1.1 Governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements. We have a senior board level lead role carried out by Timothy Reid. Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in

Education (September 2023) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Governing Body will;

- Have a strategic leadership responsibility for Grace Academy Coventry's safeguarding arrangements
- Aware of the obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 , the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation;
- Ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding, including the use of mobile and smart technology in school;
- Ensure that policies, procedure and training are effective and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner;
- Ensure the school consider local authority and Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority and the chief office of police for a police area within the local authority);
- Ensure the school have an effective child protection policy, that it is published on the school website and review this annually;
- Ensure the school have a staff behaviour policy or Code of Conduct which refers to low level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing procedures alongside acceptable use of technologies;
- Ensure that all staff and governors undergo safeguarding and child protection training on induction (including online safety and filters and monitoring processes) and this is regularly updated;
- Ensure the school contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance;
- Ensure that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying when children may be experiencing mental health problems;
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as a whole school approach and curriculum planning but recognising that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children. See section 12 of this policy for further information;
- Put in place and follow appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are absent from education;
- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the senior leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Understand the local criteria for action and local protocol for assessment;
- Recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies but take a risk-based approach to level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online and share information regarding online abuse and risks including where to access advice with parents and carers;
- Respond to allegations of abuse against the headteacher whilst ensuring there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors); and
- Ensure safer working practice is embedded and effective within policies.

## 3.2. The Role of the Headteacher

### 3.2.1 The headteacher will;

- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually **at minimum** and ratified by the governing body;
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff;
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of the named governor for safeguarding and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ensure that the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the role-holder's job description including leading on filters and monitoring processes;
- Decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hours/out of term activities;
- Appoint a 'Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children' to promote the educational achievement of children looked after; Rhiannon Spear
- Appoint a lead for online safety; Rhiannon Spear
- Promote a whole school approach to safeguarding;
- Promote resilience to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of the children;
- Ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance and a single, central record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children;
- Respond to allegations of abuse against all other members of staff including supply staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- Ensure that the school works with Children's Services, the police, health services and other services to; promote the welfare of children; provide a co-ordinated offer of early help assessments when need is identified; contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans and to protect children from harm;
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012); and
- Ensure that children's Services (from the host local authority or placing authority) have access to Grace Academy Coventry to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

## 3.3 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Grace Academy Coventry is Rhiannon spear. Our Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead (DDSL) in the DSL's absence is Zoe Smith.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and filters and monitoring) in Grace Academy Coventry



- Liaise with the safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018);
- Always be available during term time (during school hours) for staff in school to discuss safeguarding concerns. In the event that they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out this role updated a minimum of biannually;
- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
- Be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
- Identify if children may benefit from early help;
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- Make referrals to Coventry's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where children have been harmed or are at risk of significant harm.
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- Support the school with regards to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed<sup>1</sup>;
- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part 1 and/or Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023);
- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;
- Provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves Grace Academy Coventry;
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCO, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- Help to promote educational outcomes of child who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by sharing relevant information with teachers and the school leadership team;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of Grace Academy Coventry community acts in the best interests of the child;
- Ensuring Grace Academy Coventry knows who its cohort of children or have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations;
- Regularly meet (every half term at a minimum) with the safeguarding link governor and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding in Grace Academy Coventry; and
- Liaise with the headteacher regarding safeguarding cases and issues.

- Liaise with the senior mental health lead when safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Be Aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult – PACE code C 2019

3.3.2 Further details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

3.3.2 Key staff in the Academy which comprise the Safeguarding Team are:

- The Principal – Natasha Whiles
- DSL – Rhiannon Spear
- Deputy DSL – Zoe Smith
- ALT – Kieron Brehon, Emily Wheller, Emily Williams, Charlotte Lavelle, Sarah Dalton, Jayna Patel, Lisa Smith
- HOY - Alec Shrimpton, Ellie Harvey, Jessica Everitt
- AHOK - Rebecca Leach and Julie Reagan

### **3.4 The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School**

3.4.1 School staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff in Grace Academy Coventry;

- Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;
- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect; with an awareness of safeguarding issues that put children at risk of harm and behaviours associated with these risks;
- Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected but that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abuse, exploited or neglected and/or recognise their experience as harmful;
- Will be aware of indicators of child-on-child abuse and procedures to deal with this;
- All staff, but especially the DSL and deputies, will also consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families;
- Will be made aware of: the safeguarding and child protection policy; the school behaviour policy; the staff behaviour policy; information about the safeguarding response to children missing in education; the role of the designated safeguarding lead and systems in Grace Academy Coventry that support safeguarding and child protection;
- Will be provided with a copy of Part 1/Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) annually and receive annually updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities;
- Will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training including online safety;
- Will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- Should be able to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice;
- Will be made aware of the early help assessment process and understand their role in it;
- Should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance;

- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- Will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Services (though the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Should be prepared to make referrals to the MASH if they have concerns about a child's welfare and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Understands the referral process to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the role they play should they have concerns or allegations are made against any member of staff;
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure; and
- All teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

### 3.5 Multi-Agency Working

3.5.1 The school is committed to multi-agency working and operates under Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and local safeguarding arrangements.

3.5.2 The school will work with Children's Services, the police, health services, local Early Help practitioners and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

3.5.3 We work closely with our local Family Hub to ensure children receive appropriate, co-ordinated Early Help Assessments

The Moat Family Hub  
Deedmore Road  
Wood End  
Coventry  
CV2 1EQ  
024 7678 5621

3.5.4 The Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) have designated that schools and colleges are a named 'relevant agency'. As such, the school is under a statutory duty to co-operate with published CSCP arrangements.

## 4 Types of abuse

4.1 As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect and should be able to recognise signs of these. We recognise that abuse, exploitation and neglect along with other safeguarding issues are complex and often multidimensional and therefore don't fall solely under one category. Types of abuse or harm can take many forms including directly inflicting harm on a child or failing to protect a child from harm online as well as face to face both inside and outside of the school/college as well as online, including the multi-faceted occurrence of factors causing emotional harm.

The four main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are;

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;

- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect.

4.2 Types of abuse (Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023)

Type of abuse	Information
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
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.
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

Type of abuse	Information
	involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
Sexual abuse	<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of this and of the school policy and procedures for dealing with this.</p>
Neglect	<p>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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.</p>

4.3 Indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix B.

4.4 If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's services (through the MASH) and any member of staff can make this referral. A Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be available at all times, but in exceptional circumstances the member of staff should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or seek advice directly from Children's Service and then take appropriate action. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware as soon as possible.

4.5 Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant. Staff should not assume that someone else will report concerns.

4.6 The school recognises that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, the school will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child;

- 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 antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is a risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending/in the court system;
- Is themselves in the course system
- is at risk of parental abduction
- 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 at risk of 'honour-based' abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage or Breast Ironing;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- is a privately fostered child.

4.7 Grace Academy Coventry recognises that abuse can take many different forms. Staff will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if Grace Academy Coventry believes that a child is at risk of or is the victim of;

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory
- child criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation (including involvement in county lines);
- domestic abuse;
- emotional abuse;

- fabricated or induced illness;
- faith-based abuse (including Breast Ironing);
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- gangs or youth violence;
- gender-based violence;
- hate;
- Low Level Concerns
- mental health;
- neglect;
- child on child abuse;
- physical abuse;
- radicalisation;
- relationship abuse;
- serious violence and harassment;
- sexual abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including child on child abuse);
- sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images/videos (including Sexting (Youth Produced Sexualised Imagery));
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse;
- trafficking and modern slavery.

4.8 Grace Academy Coventry will also take action to protect;

- Children missing education;
- Children missing from home or care.

4.8.1 There are other familial issues that can have a detrimental impact on children.

We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) to support children and families in the following circumstances;

- Children facing the court procedures and/or children in the court system;
- Children with family members in prison;
- Children who are homeless;
- Children who need a social worker.

### **4.9 Child potentially at greater risk of harm**

4.9.1 Grace Academy Coventry recognises that some children need a social worker due to abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances and that abuse and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as educational disadvantage.

4.9.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will hold information relating to social workers working with children in the school.

4.9.3 This information will inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting welfare (including the provision of pastoral and/or academic support).

#### 4.10 Children absent from Education

4.10.1 Grace Academy Coventry understands that children that are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and criminal exploitation – particularly county lines.

4.10.2 Grace Academy Coventry will report information to the Local Authority when problems are first emerging and if there is a need for the removal of a child from roll.

#### 4.11 Elective Home Education

4.11.1 Grace Academy Coventry recognises that many home educated children have a positive learning experience and the decision is one with the child's best interests at heart.

4.11.2 Since 2016, Grace Academy Coventry has a statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of all deletions from roll. When Elective Home Education is the reason for this removal, the Local authority and other key professionals will work alongside Grace Academy Coventry to attempt to coordinate a meeting with parents where possible ideally before a final decision is made. All information is communicated via written communication home (see linked CAE policy).

#### 4.12 Children Requiring Mental Health Support

4.12.1 The school recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes preventing the impairment of children's mental health or development.

4.12.2 All staff will be aware that mental health problems may be an indicator that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

4.12.3 Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem unless they are appropriately trained.

4.12.4 We recognise that staff are well-placed to observe behaviour that may indicate that a child is experiencing a mental health problem, or is at risk of developing one. There are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems. If staff are concerned that a child is suffering a mental health problem, they should in the first instance inform the DSL/DDSL who will follow up with the student, parent/carer and/or external support where necessary.

4.12.5 If staff are concerned that a child is experiencing a mental health problem that is also a safeguarding concern, they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) immediately.

4.12.6 At Grace Academy Coventry there are two Mental Health First Aiders, these are;



- Rhiannon Spear
- Emily Williams

Emily Williams is also the wellbeing lead across the school and will support internally with students.

4.12.7 Further information, guidance and advice regarding mental health can be found on page 44 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

#### **4:13 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Trans (LGBT+)**

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

## **5 Responding to signs of abuse**

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a child's welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. On occasions when the designated safeguarding lead is not available, it should be reported to the deputy safeguarding lead without delay. Although any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.2 If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to Children's Services or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

5.3 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation;
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- Any disclosures/allegations of abuse that children have shared.

5.4 There will be occasions where a child discloses/alleges abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will;

- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;
- not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
- only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions;
- report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day;
- only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it; and
- will write up the disclosure and pass it to the designated safeguarding lead. It is likely they will have had a discussion with the DSL prior to this but delay should be avoided.

5.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure recording a clear rationale. The DSL may consider the following options;

- Managing support for the child internally within school;
- Seek advice from the social worker advice line in the MASH;
- Instigate single agency intervention and work directly with the family to improve the situation;
- Offer an Early Help Assessment to provide multi-agency help to a family;
- In cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSL will refer cases to the MASH for consideration for statutory intervention. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the MASH. However, if Grace Academy Coventry is worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.
- If parents do not consent to a referral but the school believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to Children's Services.

5.6 For further information about the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's 'Right Help, Right Time' guidance, which is used by Grace Academy Coventry to make decisions about protecting children, please visit <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/righthelprighttime>.

5.7 See page 24 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023).

5.8 In cases where members of staff become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the police without delay and will do so. Staff should refer this to the DSL first, but the legislation requires regulated health and Children's Service professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either;

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

If you believe a child is at risk of FGM, a referral to the MASH is also required.

5.9 Schools have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority. Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, expected to last 28 days or more, or the school are aware the 28 days has been exceeded.

5.10 All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. See Appendix B for further information on Grace Academy Coventry’s Prevent duty.

5.11 If any member of staff is unsure about signs of abuse or neglect, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### 5.12 Child-on-Child Abuse

5.12.1 Grace Academy Coventry understands that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and can happen inside and outside of school, online or face to face. Child-on-child abuse is taken very seriously and can include bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, physical abuse, sharing of consensual or non-consensual images or videos, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, sexual violence and/or harassment, upskirting, and initiation/hazing ceremonies. The school recognises that safeguarding issues can manifest as child-on-child abuse.

5.12.2 All members of staff will be made aware of the school’s policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. The school will ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school policy on Anti-Bullying by 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 which includes how we as a school record, investigate and deal with child-on-child abuse.

5.12.3 The school will work to prevent child-on-child abuse by:

- the established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness;
- high expectations of behaviour;
- clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour;
- providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops pupils’ understanding of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour, consent and keeping themselves safe;
- systems for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, valued and believed;
- robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils and those identified as being at risk.

5.12.4 Although it is recognised that if there are no reported cases, such abuse may still be taking place. If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, Grace Academy Coventry will investigate this by;

- Informing relevant staff.
- All incidents reported will be recorded on CPOMS

- Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- The allegation must be investigated and stopped quickly.
- An attempt will be made to help the alleged perpetrator to change their behaviour.
- Child-on-child abuse outside Academy premises to such an extent as is reasonable will be investigated and acted upon.

5.12.5 In the event that an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, victims, alleged perpetrators and any other children affected will be supported by;

- Child Concern meetings through the Common Assessment Framework
- support from Children's services
- support from the Community
- contact with parents/carers in the early stages of a problem
- intervention through the Academy's Student Support and Learning Support teams
- Referral to the Academy's SENCO
- referrals for specialist advice, either for individual students, or more generally, for whole Academy issues relating to behaviour and attendance
- consultation with parent/carers and family sessions
- one-to-one counselling with a trained specialist
- Pastoral Support Plan (PSP)
- Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- alternative curriculum considered
- changes of teaching group or class or timetable

and referral to the MASH will be considered.

5.12.6 Grace Academy Coventry will never pass off child-on-child abuse as 'banter', 'having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or other such terminology that does not recognise the harm caused. This should be a zero-tolerance approach as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. It is recognised with this that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

5.12.7 Grace Academy Coventry will adhere to guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse.

5.12.8 All staff will be made aware that 'upskirting' is a criminal offence.

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

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

5.13.1 CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, vehicle crime, threatening violence on others or even carrying weapons.

5.13.2 The school is responsible for recognising children involved in CCE are victims of exploitation and should be recognised as such due to the harm they have experienced even if they appear to have consented to the criminal activity.

5.13.3 CSE is a form of child sexual abuse including physical contact and non-contact online activities including the internet or by phone. This can happen over time or as a one-off and may happen without the child recognising this as abuse or harmful.

5.13.4 The school recognises that children of the age of 16 and 17 who can legally consent to a sexual relationship may also be the victims of CSE but may not recognise this.

### **5.14 Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude, sexual images or videos**

5.14.1 “Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos” refers to any sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery between children. This includes;

- A person under the age of 18 creating and sharing sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- A person under the age of 18 sharing sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult;
- A person under the age of 18 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

5.14.2 The school has a responsibility to educate children in the risks relating to sexting or ‘sharing consensual or non-consensual nude/sexual images or videos’ and how to keep themselves safe online. [Digital and E-Safety Policy.docx](#)

5.14.3 Any incidents or suspected incidents of ‘sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos’ should be reported to the DSL without delay.

5.14.4 Once reported to the DSL, the DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action. This could include;

- Referrals to the MASH in regards to all parties involved (also the police if an urgent response required);
- Confiscation of mobile phones in line with guidance ‘Searching, Screening and Confiscation, (January 2018);
- Support for young people involved to prevent reoccurrence;
- Sanctions in accordance with behaviour policy;

5.14.5 Any incidents of ‘sharing consensual or non-consensual nude/sexual images or videos’ involving the following will result in a MASH, and sometimes a Police, referral;

- Adult involvement;

- Coercion or blackmail;
- Children under the age of 13;
- Extreme, or violent content;
- Immediate risk of harm.

5.14.6 Staff will not view images or videos on pupil devices. Confiscated devices will be stored securely and passed to the relevant agencies.

5.14.7 We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude/sexual images or videos.

5.14.8 We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves. Children will always be supported to retrieve and delete the images.

### **5.15 Domestic Abuse**

5.15.1 Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. It can also include psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional acts of abuse.

5.15.2 The school recognises that children can be a victim of Domestic Abuse by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects or suffering domestic abuse in their own personal relationships. These all have a detrimental impact on children's health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

### **5.16 Searching, Screening and Confiscation**

5.16.1 Where necessary, searching, screening and confiscation will be used to safeguard a child/children in Grace Academy Coventry

5.16.2 The school adheres to 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (January 2018).

5.13.3 Please see [searching, screening](#) and confiscation policy for further information.

### **5.17 Online Safety**

5.17.1 The school recognises that in today's world, children need to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material with many children having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phone. The breadth of issues can be categorised currently into four areas of risk as taken from Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022:

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content (pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism)
- Contact – being subject to harmful online interaction with other users (peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit)
- Conduct – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm (making, sending and receiving explicit images)
- Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams

5.17.2 The school understand that the above can take place on a student's phone or smart device (including smart watches) whilst at school/college or elsewhere. The school have responded to this by having a whole school approach to online safety which aims to protect and educate students, parents and staff in their use of technology. Online safety is taught in PSHE and we have a clear Digital and E-Safety Policy which outlines our school procedure for managing online safety.

5.17.3 The school has also established mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns highlighted through our filter and monitoring systems for both staff and students. The effectiveness of this is regularly reviewed with staff aware of how to escalate concerns.

**5.18** To raise concerns about children, members of staff should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by telephone to discuss the referral. They should then complete the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and submit this to the MASH. The school will follow up referrals if we do not receive feedback from Children's Services to ascertain the outcome of all referrals.

**MASH Telephone number:** 02476 788 555

**MASH online referral form:** <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren>

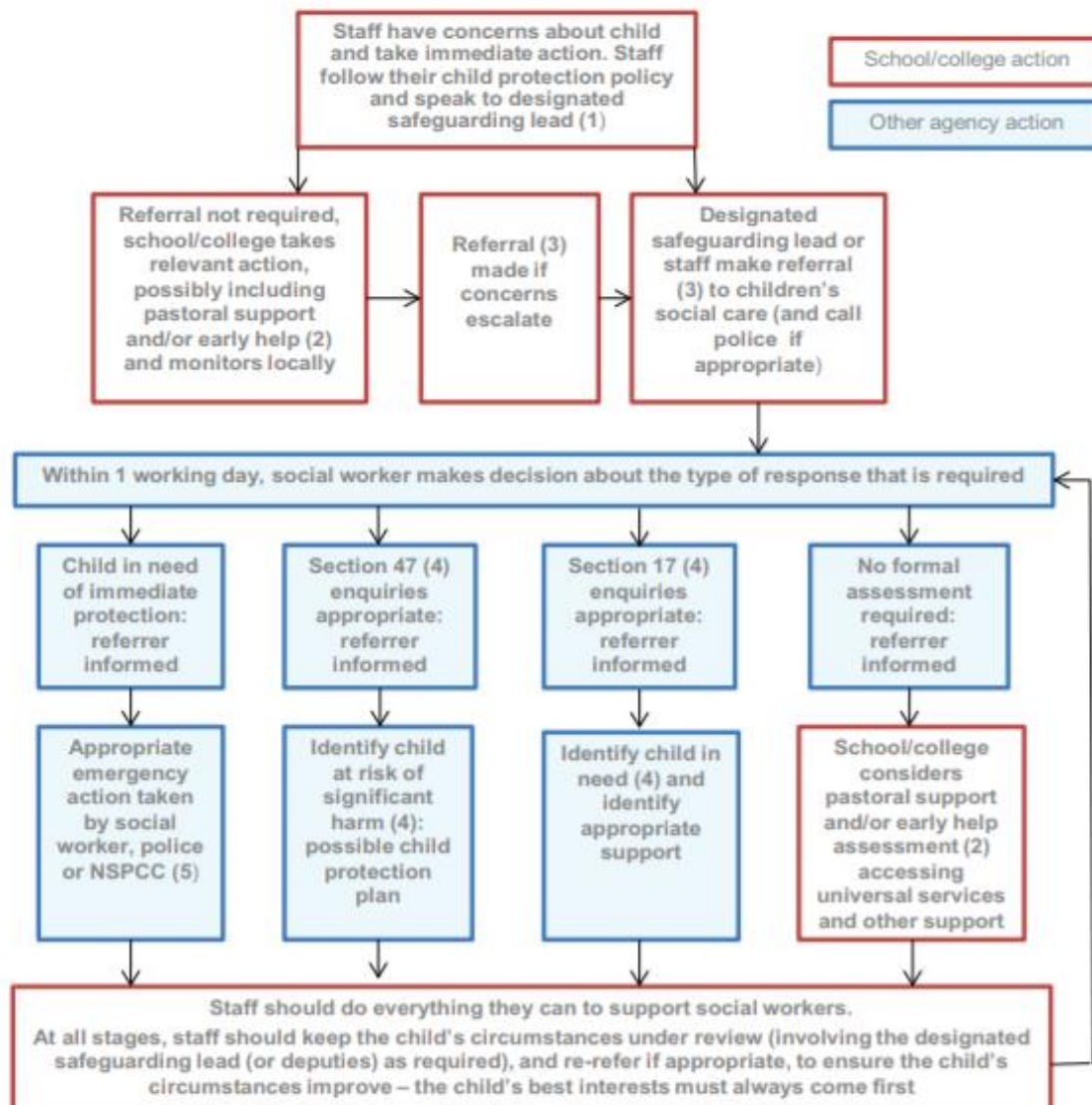
**Out of hours Emergency Duty Team:** 02476 832 222

**Prevent/Channel Referrals:** Refer to MASH ([mash@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:mash@coventry.gov.uk)) and to [CTU\\_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

5.18.1 If a child's situation does not appear to be improving following a referral, the school may re-refer the child. We will also consider using the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's Managing Professional Disagreements policy to ensure that our concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the child.



## Actions where there are concerns about a child



- (1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
- (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).



### 6 Record-keeping

6.1 All concerns, discussions and decision made will be recorded in writing and kept confidential and stored securely.

6.2 A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept in individual children's files. This will be separate from the main school file and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.

6.3 Grace Academy Coventry keeps all safeguarding files electronically, using a system called Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS).

6.4 Staff will submit all concerns in writing to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, but conversations will also be followed up in writing.

6.5 In the event that a child moves school, the safeguarding file will be transferred to the new setting securely and separately from the main school file in a timely manner (within 5 days for in-year transfers). Once received by the new school, this school will not retain the information.

6.6 The school will seek to hold at least two emergency contacts for every child.

6.7 All data processed by Grace Academy Coventry is done so in line with the General Data Protection Guidelines and the Data Protection Act (2018). Please see the following policies for additional information:

[\(Data policy link\)](#)

6.8 Further information regarding information sharing and data processing in relation to safeguarding can be found in Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

### 7 Photography and Images

7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at school events for promotional reasons will be sought when the child joins the school.

7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify Grace Academy Coventry if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.

7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other identifiable personal information.

7.4 Photographs of children will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

### 8 Early Help Assessment

8.1 Grace Academy Coventry is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding

children. Grace Academy Coventry is committed to working closely with its neighbouring family hub to work with families in the community to improve outcomes for children.

8.2 Grace Academy Coventry works within the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's *'Right Help, Right Time'* framework, available on the CSCP website.

## 9 Staff training

9.1 In order for staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, Grace Academy Coventry has committed to training staff throughout the academic year. All staff members will be made aware of Grace Academy Coventry's safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their induction. As part of this training and their annual refresher they will also receive;

- This 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy';
- The staff Code of Conduct
- Copies of Part 1 **and/or** Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)
- School procedures for Children Missing Education
- The school Behaviour Policy

9.2 Staff at Grace Academy Coventry will;

- Read the 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy';
- Read the staff Code of Conduct
- Receive copies of Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)
- Know the school procedures for Children Missing Education
- Read the Academy Behaviour Policy
- Read the staff bulletins

They also may be provided with:

- Behaviour for learning
- Signs of Safety introduction to key staff
- Local authority training - DSL briefings
- Governor training
- Volunteer training

9.3 Grace Academy Coventry recognise that children may engage in risky behaviours that may put them at additional risk of danger. These can include drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos. Staff will also be trained in these areas in order to be able to further recognise if a child is at risk of harm.

9.4 All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For

example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

## 10 Safer Recruitment

10.1 Grace Academy Coventry is committed to providing children with a safe environment, in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and all staff are subject to the following checks;

- Identity check;
- DBS clearance;
- Prohibition from teaching checks (where required);
- Barred List check;
- Section 128 checks (as required - leadership and management);
- Reference check (two references required);
- Professional qualifications check;
- Right to work in the UK check;
- Further checks for those who have lived outside the UK;
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (as required);
- Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness may also be sought.

10.2 A record of all checks completed for members of staff will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

10.3 All new members of staff will be required to obtain DBS clearance. Grace Academy Coventry reserves the right to re-check DBS clearance for any member of staff where information is received that indicates that they may pose a risk to children and may ask candidates to be registered on the DBS update service.

10.4 At least one member of every interview panel will have undergone Safer Recruitment training which will be refreshed every 2 years.

10.5 We take proportionate decisions on whether to check individuals above and beyond what is legally required dependant on individual circumstance.

10.6 Any visitor to the school who has not been subject to the necessary checks will be supervised at all times and risk assessed.

10.7 All safer recruitment practices at Grace Academy Coventry comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023). See Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) for further information.

***See Safer Recruitment policy [link] for further details.***

## 11 Allegations of abuse against staff

11.1 Grace Academy Coventry takes all safeguarding matters including low level concerns and/or allegations that harm to a child has occurred against staff (including agency, volunteers and contractors) seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) and the CSCP Guidance, 'Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers'.

### 11.2 Allegations or concerns may include

- Staff having behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Staff possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Staff behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Staff behaving or possibly behaving in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of work). This is known as 'Transferable risk'.

11.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Headteacher, or should there be a conflict of interest to the Headteacher, it must be immediately reported to the Chair of Governors.

11.4 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor other than the Principal, it must be reported to the Principal without delay.

11.5 Concerns or allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Principal or Chair of Governors as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

11.6 The Headteacher or Chair of Governors should consider if the concern or allegation meets the harms threshold for Designated Officer intervention and seek guidance/advice if unsure by emailing [lado@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:lado@coventry.gov.uk). 'Low-level' concern does not mean it is not significant. This is a term used for any concern (no matter how small) that an adult working with a child may have breached the staff Code of Conduct and does not meet the harm threshold. Examples of which may include:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. Or;
- Humiliating pupils.

**The details of the LADO can be found on the front of this policy. Immediate referrals can be made via the following link:**

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/206/coventry\\_safeguarding\\_children\\_partnership/2628/local\\_authority\\_designated\\_officer\\_lado](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/206/coventry_safeguarding_children_partnership/2628/local_authority_designated_officer_lado)

11.7 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority designated officer within 24 hours. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

11.8 If a child has suffered or may have suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral will also be made.

11.9 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority designated officer will provide information and support to Grace Academy Coventry in managing the allegation.

11.10 A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, or would have been removed if they had not resigned irrespective of whether they have resigned.

### **11.11 Supply Teachers and all contracted staff**

11.11.1 Although the school does not directly employ supply teachers and contractors, the school will ensure that any concerns or allegations are referred to LADO and the relevant agency informed as the employer.

11.11.2 The school will never cease to use a supply teacher for safeguarding reasons without liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer and reaching an agreed outcome.

11.11.3 Governing bodies/proprietors will liaise with the supply agency to determine whether to suspend or redeploy the supply teacher whilst they carry out their investigation.

11.11.4 The school will inform supply agencies of its process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's human resource manager (or equivalent) to meetings and regularly updating agencies on relevant school policies. The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct contact with children or staff, so will not be able to gather information.

### **11.12 Governors**

11.12.1 If an allegation or concern is about a Governor, the school/college will follow local procedures.

### **11.13 Volunteers**

11.13.1 Risk assessments and a DBS check will be requested for all volunteers. Under no circumstances will a volunteer prior to satisfactory checks being completed be alone with children unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

### **11.14 Whistleblowing**

11.14.1 Grace Academy Coventry operates a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or Grace Academy Coventry safeguarding processes to the senior leadership team.

11.14.2 Appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place whereby the senior leadership team will take all concerns seriously.

11.14.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in school, they should refer to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures.

### 11.15 Complaints Procedure

The School operates a complaint procedure which will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures. Low level concerns are dealt with under the 'Low Level Concerns' policy and logged on a central spreadsheet accessible by the Principal.

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

## 12 Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

12.1 Grace Academy Coventry recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.

12.2 The school will teach children about safeguarding, including online safety. As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, the school will cover relevant issues in line with government guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

12.3 Schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The school/college will have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/college life. These will be underpinned by the school/college's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum (RSHE).

12.4 Children at Grace Academy Coventry will receive the following as part of our promotion of safeguarding across the curriculum:

- E Safety and Sexting (Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)
- CSE
- Prevent strategy
- Mental health and resilience

- Healthy relationships
- Level 1 Safeguarding
- Any other appropriate education as required

### 12.4 Education at home and remote education

Grace Academy Coventry continues to operate under this policy and KCSIE/WTSC when children are learning at home or at school. Please also refer to Annex A when children are learning at home.

## 13 Children Looked After

13.1 The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. Grace Academy Coventry recognises that children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities by virtue of this. The Designated Lead for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children is Rhiannon Spear

13.2 Staff will receive training on how to best safeguard children who are Looked-After and who have been Previously Looked-After.

13.3 The school will work with Personal Advisors when children leave care (where applicable).

13.4 Grace Academy Coventry is committed to working with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

## 14 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or Physical Health Needs

14.1 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), Grace Academy Coventry is aware that children with additional needs or disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse both online and offline and additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect. This could be because;

- 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 SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content

14.2 Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead and SENCO. Staff will also be trained in recognising signs of abuse in children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions.

14.3 Staff will take into account the needs of a child when responding to concerns of abuse or when taking a disclosure. We recognise that some children require specialist intervention to communicate and advice from the SENCO will be sought in these circumstances.

14.4 Safeguarding learning opportunities within the curriculum will be appropriately differentiated to ensure all children can access it.

## 15 Use of reasonable force

15.1 There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children. We will not use any more force than is proportionate and necessary.

The Academy supports the view that the use of force or restraint is a legitimate strategy when applied professionally in situations in which non-physical interventions and/or warnings have either failed or are not an option. It is not part of the normal disciplinary / classroom management process and should only be used in exceptional circumstances. This must be recorded in accordance with:

### GA- Searching & Restraint Policy V 0.7 DRAFT

15.7 Context - The Academy holds the view that students learn best in a calm and secure learning environment in which both students and teachers are clear about the expectations held about conduct and attitude.

15.8 All students are taught via the Values and Standards and Tutor programmes about managing their emotions including anger and those in particular need of additional help are by arrangement given assistance by our pastoral, Ethos and Nurture teams.

15.9 In any conflict situation which may be escalating to the point where reasonable force or restraint may become necessary, staff must where possible de-escalate/calm the situation. They should not use force when there is significant risk of injury to themselves or others but allow the child to leave and immediately summon help.

## 16 Work Experience/Alternative provision

The School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of students placed with an alternative provision provider or work experience and will be satisfied that this provider meets the needs of the pupil. Written confirmation from the provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out will be sought on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

16.2 The DSL will continue to have oversight of all pupils accessing any part of their learning from an alternative provider or delivery online or offsite provided by any organisation or individual not employed by the school. The DSL will ensure that robust arrangements are in place for timely and effective information sharing of safeguarding information between the school and alternative/external providers.

16.3 The DSL will also take responsibility for ensuring that robust procedures are in place to confirm



attendance and to enable the swift reporting of non-attendance and children going missing from alternative/ external providers at any time when they should be with that provider.

## 17 Children staying with host families (see Annex D KCSIE)

17.1 Grace Academy Coventry does not currently have children staying in host families. However, if this does occur in the future Grace Academy will liaise with the partner schools abroad, to establish a shared understanding of, and agreement to the arrangements in place for the visit.

17.2 The ALT at Grace Academy will use their professional judgement to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard effectively every child who will take part in the exchange.

17.3 Parents would also be informed of this arrangement with the partner schools at this time.

## 18 Boarding schools and residential settings

18.1 This is not relevant to Grace Academy Coventry currently.

## 19 Summary

19.1 The school is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child. For further information or if you have any queries about this policy, please contact the school.

## Appendix A

The school's safeguarding policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following policies;

- Allegations Against Staff or Persons in a Position of Trust Policy (LSCB)
- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children/Young people with Medical Needs
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Drugs Education Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Escalation and Resolution of Professional Disagreements (LSCB)
- Health & Safety Policy
- Digital Safety Policy
- Medicine & First Aid Policy
- SMSC Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Trips and Visits Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Grace Foundation Safeguard Policy
- Safeguarding and Promoting Student Welfare

The school adheres to Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies, which can be found here:

- Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers (CSCP)
- Allegations Against Members of Staff
- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children/Young people with Medical Needs
- Children Missing in Education Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Critical Incident Plan
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Equalities Policy

- Managing Professional Disagreements (CSCP)
- Health & Safety Policy
- HR & Governance Policy
- Digital and E-Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- IT Policy
- Lone Working Policy/Home visits policy
- Medicine & First Aid Policy
- Primary-Secondary Transition Policy
- PSHE Policy
- SRE Policy Self-harm/Mental Health Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Site Security Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Trips and Visits Policy
- Searching and Restraints Policy
- Visitor Management Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

## Appendix B – Further Safeguarding Information

### Types of Abuse

As outlined in paragraph 4.4, the school will take action if we believe a child is at risk of or is suffering from abuse. Abuse is not limited to physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. For further information on the definitions of the types of abuse below, please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), Annex A.

See below for policy information relating to other key safeguarding issues. All decisions taken in responding to concerns of abuse will be taken in the best interests of the child.

#### **Bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying**

Grace Academy Coventry takes all forms of bullying seriously and will respond sensitively and quickly to any reported bullying. Children should report any bullying to their form tutor, to the DSL or to any trusted member of staff and we will work to resolve it.

We also teach children about the dangers of bullying through our curriculum. See link to curriculum here: [Grace Academy Coventry Curriculum](#)

Bullying can take many forms and we have several policies that cover different aspects of bullying. Please see the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Behaviour Policy and paragraph 5.8 of this policy for further information.

Our Academy policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document. It should be noted that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. All staff are aware that students with SEND and/or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied or victims of child abuse. Grace Academy keep a record of bullying and racist incidents on CPOMS.

#### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Child criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines)**

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, males or 10 females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be

exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

The working together advice on CSE and the definition can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

A progress report detailing the Govt's work in this area along with forward commitment can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-progress-report>

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>103</sup> should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

### **Domestic abuse**

Grace Academy Coventry has signed up to and uses Operation Encompass to safeguard students who have experienced Domestic Violence.

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 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 can have a serious, 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.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse describes sustained and repeated responses to the child or the child's behaviour which are so negative, inconsistent, rejecting or inappropriate that the child shows serious difficulties in emotional, social or behavioural development. What makes the parental behaviour abusive is that it typifies their relationship with the child. It is thus not usually indicated by a specific incident, but is observed in the interaction with the child. One child may be a scapegoat or treated completely differently from their siblings.

### Parental behaviours associated with emotional abuse:

The following may identify parental behaviours which, if persistent, may be emotionally abusive.

- A persistently negative view of the child, particularly as inherently bad, often combined with 'deserved' harsh punishment
- Inconsistent and unpredictable responses, particularly where there is threat to or rejection of the child
- Expectations which are inappropriate for the developmental stage of the child, either too high or too low, over protective or under protective
- A lack of emotional availability or responsiveness to the child
- No respect for personal boundaries of the child, not seeing the child as an individual
- Promoting miss-socialisation or poor adaptation
- Contradictory, confusing or misleading messages in communicating with the child which seriously distorts reality for the child or promotes confusion
- Serious physical or psychiatric illness of a parent, including periods of hospitalisation
- Induction of a child into bizarre parental beliefs
- Breakdown in parental relationship with chronic, bitter conflict over contact or residence
- Major emotional rejection of the child and parental inability to perceive his/her needs with any objectivity
- Major and repeated familial change e.g. separations, reconstruction of families
- Parental drug and/or alcohol addiction or involvement in seriously deviant lifestyles
- Entrenched offending behaviour which may be criminal and which might also lead to a term of imprisonment.

Behaviour in a child which may indicate emotional abuse includes:

- Very low self-esteem often with an inability to accept praise or to trust
- Lack of any sense of fun, over serious or apathetic
- Excessively clingy or attention seeking behaviour
- Over anxiety, either watchful and constantly checking or over anxious to please
- Developmental delay, especially in speech
- Substantial failure to reach potential in learning, linked with lack of confidence poor concentration and lack of pride in achievement
- Self-learning, compulsive rituals; stereotypical repetitive behaviour
- Unusual pattern of response to others showing emotions

**Fabricated or induced illness** - fabrication or induction of illness in a child' rather than using a particular term. If, as a result of a carer's behaviour, there is concern that the child is or is likely to suffer significant harm, this guidance should be followed. The key issue is not what term to use to describe this type of abuse, but the impact of fabricated or induced illness on the child's health and development, and consideration of how best to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

The following list of behaviours exhibited by carers which can be associated with fabricating or inducing illness in a child can include:

- deliberately inducing symptoms in children by administering medication or other substances, by means of intentional transient airways obstruction or by interfering with the child's body so as to cause physical signs.
- interfering with treatments by over dosing with medication, not administering them or interfering with medical equipment such as infusion lines;
- claiming the child has symptoms which are unverifiable unless observed directly, such as pain, frequency of passing urine, vomiting or fits. These claims result in unnecessary investigations and treatments which may cause secondary physical problems;
- exaggerating symptoms which are unverifiable unless observed directly, causing professionals to undertake investigations and treatments which may be invasive, are unnecessary and therefore are harmful and possibly dangerous;
- obtaining specialist treatments or equipment for children who do not require them;
- alleging psychological illness in a child.

**Faith-based abuse** – See emotional and physical abuse

### **So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing and Forced Marriage)**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Breast Ironing also known as 'Breast Flattening' is the process whereby young pubescent girls' (usually aged between 9-15 years old and from practising communities) have their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely.

Breast Ironing is a harmful, cultural practice. There is no specific law within the UK around Breast Ironing, however it is a form of Physical Abuse. Professionals working with children must be able to

identify the signs and symptoms of girls who are at risk of, or have undergone breast ironing.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) immediately

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL) and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Also see: National FGM Centre: Breast Flattening.

### **Forced marriage**

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

### **The difference between forced marriage and arranged marriage**

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. Consent is essential to all marriages – only the spouses will know if they gave their consent freely. If families have to resort to violence or emotional pressure to make someone marry, that person's consent has not been given freely and therefore it is a forced marriage.

All staff working with victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence need to be aware of the 'one chance' rule. That is, they may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus they may only have one chance to save a life. This means that all staff needs to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations if they come across forced marriage cases. If the victim is allowed to walk out of the door without support being offered, that one chance might be wasted.

Signs to be aware of:

- Absence and persistent absence
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school



- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility
- Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Sudden announcement of engagement to stranger
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education
- Anxious, depressed, emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem

These warning signs may indicate many issues and are not necessarily on their own indicators of such issues but neither should they be ignored. The list is not exhaustive but an indication.

### Family History:

- Siblings forced to marry
- Early marriage of siblings
- Self-harm or suicide of siblings
- Death of a parent
- Family disputes
- Running away from home
- Unreasonable restrictions e.g. kept at home by parents ('house arrest') and financial restrictions

**Gangs or youth violence** – See Behaviour policy

**Gender-based violence** – See Behaviour and Equality policy

**Hate** – Please see Behaviour policy

**Homelessness** – Please inform the DSL and the Family Support Officer (Suzie Scott) of any suspected incidents so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity to the Local Authority. Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

**(So-called) 'Honour-based' abuse (For FGM and Forced Marriage, types of so-called 'honour-based' abuse, see above)**

**Radicalisation and Extremism** –

All staff are trained on the Prevent duty with a member of the safeguard team WRAP trained. Concerns of this nature are treated the same as a Safeguard concern and referred in the same way to the DSL who may decide to get advice and make a referral to the West Midlands Channel team. The DSL is kept up to date with both the national and local Prevent picture and updates the ALT and school accordingly.

· Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also

includes calling for the death of members of armed forces.

- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person come to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- 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 electronics 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 and ideological cause.

**Relationship abuse-** See emotional, sexual and physical

### **Serious Violence**

#### **Sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer-on-peer abuse)**

Both male and female children can be sexually abused by adults or other children. These activities are usually kept very secret and are damaging to children both in the short and long term. Sexual abuse can occur without any physical contact, as abuse can mean being forced to watch sexual activity.

Children may also be made to take part in prostitution or pornographic activity.

Most child victims are sexually abused by someone they know – either a member of their family or someone well known to them or their family. The children are likely to have been put under considerable pressure not to reveal what has been happening. The abuse may carry on for many years before it comes to light. It is important to note that children/young people are also capable of sexually abusive behaviour.

Sexual abuse often presents itself in a veiled way; recognition of sexual abuse generally follows either a direct statement from the child (or very occasionally from the abuser), or more often suspicion based on the child's circumstances, behaviour, or physical symptoms or signs. Although not exhaustive, these physical signs should alert professionals of the possibility of abuse – several features may be present.

#### Physical manifestations

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy (especially in younger girls or when the identity of the father is uncertain)
- Genital lacerations or bruising
- Vaginal bleeding in pre-pubescent girls
- Abnormal dilation of vagina, anus or urethra

#### Additional physical signs

- Itching, redness, soreness
- Unexpected bleeding from the vagina or anus
- Daytime wetting
- Faecal soiling or retention

Emotional and behavioural manifestation:

- Behaviour with sexual overtones (depending on age and understanding)
- Explicit or frequent sexual preoccupation in talk and play
- Sexual relationships with adults or other children
- Hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words, play or drawings

Children may also behave in the following ways:

- Withdrawn, tearful or aggressive behaviour to peers or adults
- Running away from home
- Suicide attempts and self-mutilation
- Child psychiatric problems, including behaviour problems, withdrawal from social contact, onset of wetting or soiling when previously dry and clean, severe sleep disturbances, arson
- Learning problems which do not match intellectual ability, or poor concentration (for some sexually abused children, school may be a haven – they will arrive early, are reluctant to leave and perform well)
- Marked reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for PE

### **Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images and videos, Sexting and/or Youth Produced sexualised Imagery**

Youth Produced Sexualised Imagery is imagery that is created by under 18's themselves and involves still photographs, videos and streaming. It includes consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, images and/or videos.

In the latest advice for schools and Colleges (UKCCIS 2016), sexting is defined as the production and/sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18. It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

Youth produces imagery does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under 18 years olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.

What to do if an incident involving 'sexting' comes to your attention.

Report it to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

- Never view, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- Do not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- Do not share information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Please also refer to sexual violence

### **Trafficking and modern slavery**

Please see Attendance and Child Missing in Education. All suspected incidents to be reported immediately to the DSL.

### **Children absent from education, home or care**

The school will also take action to protect;

- Children absent from education
- Children missing from home or care

### **Children Absent from Education**

The Academy will inform the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more or if the student is on the child protection register for 2 days or more.

This is particularly important to help prevent the risk of abuse and neglect and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Local Authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving education otherwise than at a school

More information can be found in the Attendance and Child missing from Education Policy.

### **Children Missing from home or care**

Grace Academy is part of Operation Perdita which notifies the Academy of any students who go missing from home through the West Midlands Police. All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Please refer to the Attendance and Child missing from Education Policy.

### **Private Fostering**

The school has a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority.

We will do this through a MASH referral. It is important that parents/carers inform us if a child is going to be staying at an alternative address to that of their primary care-givers for more than 28 days. The Academy have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority.

### Indicators of abuse

See below for possible indicators of abuse. (Taken from *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*, 2015)

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

The school recognises that the above list of indicators is not exhaustive and staff will receive training on indicators of abuse.

### Low Level Concerns about staff

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms threshold.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

### **Whistle blowing**

Any staff member/professional should be able to access numbers. If you feel you cannot talk to someone in school, you can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 08000 280285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)