



**St Mary's Church of England V.A.
Primary School
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Policy**

Rationale

At St Mary's School the staff and Governors are committed to ensuring that each pupil is kept safe. The health and safety of all children is of paramount importance. Parents send their children to school each day with the expectation that school provides a secure environment in which their children can flourish. Staff and Governors at St Mary's school are committed to **providing a safe and supportive environment.**

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety and bullying and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, school security, drugs and substance misuse, positive behaviour etc. There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safer recruitment guidance
- Whistleblowing Policy
- E safety Policy
- AUP
- Attendance Policy
- Medicines in school policy
- Policy for Sex and Relationships Education

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of St Mary's school

The policy aims to:

- Ensure that the safety and well-being of children is the highest priority in all aspects of the school's work.
- Ensure that all members of the school community are aware of their responsibilities and the procedures in place in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure the school provides a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop.
- Enable staff to identify children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer harm, and take appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip members of our staff and children with the skills and knowledge needed to keep them safe
- Ensure we offer early help to vulnerable children and families

- Ensure pupils are supported in accordance with the pupils Child Protection/Child in Need plan.
- Ensure the DSL and DDSL work closely with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and implements recommendations from Serious Case Reviews to improve the way we work to protect children.
- Promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together to protect all pupils.

Roles and responsibilities

Our Governing Body works to ensure that the school meets the statutory requirements in relation to all safeguarding matters which include:

- the school has a safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available to parents on request;
- the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children;
- the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures;
- a senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for child protection;
- staff undertake appropriate child protection training;
- they remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements;
- a governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the head teacher
- where services or activities are provided on the school premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and liaises with the school on these matters where appropriate.
- they review their policies and procedures annually and provide information to the LA about them and about how the above duties have been discharged
- Nominate a Governor for Safeguarding; who will review the Safeguarding and child protection policy and action plan, audit the Single Central Register and Child Protection record keeping, undertake Safer recruitment training and review Safeguarding issues .
- All policies will be checked by the Safeguarding governor or a member of the safeguarding team

Our Headteacher will ensure that:

- the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body or Proprietor are fully implemented, and followed by all staff;
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities; and
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies.

Senior Member of Staff with Designated Responsibility for Safeguarding will:

- refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies;

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment;
- liaise with the headteacher to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations
- recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral;
- have a working knowledge of how Gloucestershire Local Authority Safeguarding procedures operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these;
- ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school's safeguarding and child protection policy;
- ensure that all staff have induction training;
- keep detailed accurate secure written records and/or concerns
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.
- ensure children know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- work in partnership with other agencies; referrals and support; information sharing.
- ensure a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- undertake a safeguarding evaluation/audit, report to SLT and Governing body.
- ensure that all staff have read and understood part 1 of Keeping children safe in education

All staff and volunteers will:

- fully comply with the school's policies and procedures
- attend appropriate training
- inform the designated person of any concerns.

Safeguarding children (child protection)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs. J. Woolley (headteacher) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Mrs. H. Silins (Pastoral and Inclusion Lead).

They take responsibility for co-ordinating suspected child abuse. Any and all concerns must be referred to designated staff who will then follow the procedures set out in the Gloucester Children and Young People's Directorate procedures guidance. Information referred to the designated staff is recorded in the child protection records folder which is stored in the Pastoral and Inclusion Lead's office.

The Governors responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection are **Dr. A. Walsh and Mr. C. Evans.**

Four distinct categories of abuse have been identified:

1. Neglect
2. Physical Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Emotional Abuse

Staff are aware that additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect in relation to children with SEN and disabilities.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

The school pays full regard to current DfE guidance 'Keeping children safe in Education September '16'. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including e.g.

volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, undertaking List 99 and DBS (Disclosure-Barring-Service) checks.

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

- An enhanced DBS is obtained for **all** new appointments to our school's workforce.
- All members of the governing body will have an enhanced DBS check.
- Volunteers, who help on a regular basis, must also have a DBS clearance. For a brief activity, such as a school visit, which does not involve the supervision or close contact of children the school **may** telephone for a "99" check. For extended contact with children, when children may be left alone with an adult, or when an adult visitor may be in and around the school building a full DBS search will be conducted. The office performs this. Visitors who do not yet have clearance will have a red lanyard label and will under no circumstance be left alone with a child or group of children.
- the school is committed to keep an up to date single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on our staff.
- all new appointments to our school workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate
- our school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy.
- identity checks are carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the LA
- appropriate senior staff and Governors will have undertaken Safe Recruitment Training.
- There will be at least one person involved in every recruitment process who has undertaken specific training. The Headteacher, deputy Headteacher and Pastoral and Inclusion Lead have trained in safer recruitment.

School Training and Staff Induction

The school's staff with designated responsibility for child protection undertake basic child protection training and training in inter-agency working and refresher training at 2 yearly intervals. The Headteacher and all other school staff, including non-teaching staff, undertake appropriate induction training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals.

Safe Practice

Safe working practice ensures that pupils are safe and that all staff:

- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions;
- work in an open and transparent way;
- work with other colleagues where possible in situations open to question
- discuss and/or take advice from school leadership over any incident which may give rise to concern;
- record any incidents or decisions made;
- apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality;
- be aware of our confidentiality policy

- are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff

Staff will be supported by the school's Designated Safeguarding lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead, LA and professional associations.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be supported by each other, the designated governor for safeguarding, the LA and other professional associations.

Allegations regarding person(s) working in or on behalf of school (including volunteers) :

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the school that he or she has:

- a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- c. Has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

We will always follow the Gloucestershire Local Authority procedures as set out in the **Model code of conduct and confidential reporting procedure (whistle-blowing) for school employees in maintained schools - April 2014**

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

Initial Action

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the headteacher/CP Coordinator and make a record.
- In the event that an allegation is made against the headteacher the matter will be reported to the Safeguarding Governor who will proceed as the 'headteacher'.
- The headteacher will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs.
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children.
- The headteacher may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation; however no person will be interviewed at this stage.
- The headteacher will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by school or if there needs to be a referral to social care and/or the police for investigation.
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and staff.
- The headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor of any allegation.

Partnership with Parents

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate and keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and

confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

St Mary's school will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with the class teacher.

Raising Awareness

- parents are made aware of the safeguarding and child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later;
- where a child leaves the establishment, the child protection file is transferred to the new school separately from the main pupil file. If a child goes missing or leaves to be educated at home, then the child protection file should be copied and the copy forwarded to the Education Social Work Service.

Partnerships with others

Our school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies who are partners in safeguarding procedures. There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children.

We implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse by following county procedures and referring to the Children's Helpdesk (01452 426565). These procedures are in line with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection (and South West) Procedures (http://www.swcpp.org.uk/swcpp_procedures.htm) and which promote the care and welfare of pupils. The GCSB Child Protection Procedures are only available online and updated regularly.

Site security

St Mary's provides a secure site but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. Therefore all people on the site have to adhere to the rules which govern it. Laxity can cause potential problems to safeguarding. Therefore:

- Doors should be closed to prevent intrusion and to facilitate smooth exits.
- Empty classrooms should have closed windows and outside doors locked.
- Visitors and volunteers must only enter through the main entrance and must sign in at the office.
- Pupils will only be allowed home with adults with parental responsibility or confirmed permission.
- Pupils should never be allowed to leave school alone during school hours, and if collected by an adult, signed out.

If a child leaves the school premises without permission then staff have been informed never to chase after a child, but rather to report immediately to the office. Then parents and police will be informed of the circumstances.

Attendance and Children Missing from Education

Excellent attendance is expected of all pupils, but when children are unwell parents are expected to confirm absence by telephone immediately. If there is no notification school has a policy of phoning home to ascertain each pupil's whereabouts.

The Pastoral and Inclusion Lead and Headteacher are notified whenever a child's attendance and punctuality causes concern. Attendance rates are reported annually to the governors and to all parents. Measures are in place encourage children to attend regularly and punctually and the school is aware of its right to take legal action against parents who do not ensure good attendance and punctuality.

The school follows the Gloucestershire LA procedures "Children Who May Be Missing/Lost From Education". Where children on roll at a school are absent without explanation, and the school has made the usual enquiries they should refer the case to the LA Entitlement and Inclusion Team in the usual way. If the allocated worker cannot locate the child/family the school will be advised so that they can take the child off roll (normally after 4 weeks).

The relevant Social worker will be informed of unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a Child Protection Plan.

Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face in accordance with The Single Equality Act 2010.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers

The Health and Safety Policy

The school has a health and safety policy, which is reviewed on an annual basis by the Governor's and Senior Leadership Team.

Any concerns from staff are reported to a member of the Senior Leadership team.

Each term there is a fire drill that practices efficient evacuation from the buildings. The school conducts an annual Fire Risk Assessment.

The Design of the Curriculum

The curriculum deals with safeguarding in two ways. Firstly, the curriculum, in subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education discusses relevant issues with pupils. Topics include such

themes as Drugs, Sex and Relationships and Stranger Danger. Pupils are encouraged to explore and discuss these issues.

Secondly, the curriculum is designed so that safety issues within the subject are discussed and safe practices taught, such as using equipment properly in PE and Design and Technology. At all times there has to be appropriate staffing levels and when the curriculum is taken out of school appropriate and agreed pupil/adult ratios are maintained. The lead adult always assesses visits as to the level of risk and all trips are finally authorised by the Headteacher.

Visiting speakers are always welcome into school so that they can give specialist knowledge to the children. Each visit is looked at as an individual event and a risk assessment carried out if needed.

E- Safety

New technologies have become integral to the lives of children in today's society, both within schools and in their lives outside school. The internet, other digital and information technologies are powerful tools which open up new opportunities for everyone but they can put children at risk within and outside the school. Pupils should be encouraged to use them as much as is possible, but at all times in a safe way. Pupils must never be left unattended whilst online and teachers should ensure that this does not happen. If any member of staff, volunteer or Governor knows of misuse, either by a member of staff or pupil the issue should be reported to the Headteacher without delay.

Pupil Information

St Mary's school will keep up to date and accurate information in order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them the school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- emergency contact details (if different from above)
- details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- if the child is or has been on the Child Protection Register or subject to a care plan
- name and contact detail of G.P.
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

The school will collate, store and agree access to this information. Confidential information is stored on password protected computers in the office, where access is restricted. Paper copies of confidential information are kept in a secure location with limited access.

Confidentiality

The school has regard for the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board publication 'Guidance for safer working practice for Adults working with Children and Young People'.

This means that adults:

- be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so
- are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner
- should seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them
- need to know to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported

Children who abuse other children

At St. Mary's we recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. As a school we work to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and will investigate and deal with any allegations robustly. Where needed risk assessments will be carried out and strategies put in place to protect the child who has suffered abuse and to offer them support. Concerns raised will be treated seriously and followed up in a timely and sensitive fashion. It is important to be conscious that any child who is engaging in abusive behaviour towards others may have been subject to abuse from other children or from adults. Abusive behaviour can be displayed in a variety of ways and can consist of sexual abuse / activity; physical harm; emotional abuse and / or verbal abuse. Children who abuse others should be held responsible for their abusive behaviour, whilst being identified and responded to in a way which meets their needs as well as protecting others. In such incidences, the school will follow guidance issued in relation to children who abuse others and local procedures and make referrals to social care, CYPS and / or police as appropriate.

The Prevent Agenda

The school has a responsibility in relation to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, this duty is known as the Prevent duty.

- Prevent lead is the designated Safeguarding lead
- The prevent lead will make a referral to the Channel programme, the police or the children's helpdesk if a pupil is assessed as being at risk.
- We will ensure there is effective engagement with parents and families and assist and advise families who raise concerns.

Behaviour Management

- At St Mary's school the Behaviour Management Policy is a framework for the creation of a happy, secure and orderly environment in which pupils can learn and develop as caring and responsible individuals.

Anti – bullying

- All allegations of bullying are taken extremely seriously and the school actions will follow the agreed anti-bullying policy. We encourage children to work against it and report any incidents of bullying.

Physical Restraint

St Mary's school follows DfE 'Use of Reasonable Force July 2013' guidelines which asserts that physical restraint may be used if there is the possibility that a child may be about to cause harm to him/ herself or to another. It also asserts that on no occasion should such physical contact be used as a punishment.

Medical Care Plans

A pupil at St Mary's with a permanent medical condition that may require medication in an emergency or a prescribed course of action will have a Protocol written. Staff will be given appropriate training.

References :

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DFe March 2015)

Keeping children safe in education (September '16)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused

Guidance for safer working practice for adults working with children and young people

(Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's board)

Further sources of reference of child protection and safeguarding can be found at: www.gscb.org.uk

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy shall be reviewed annually by the Governor's Community and Inclusion Committee with any recommended changes approved by the full Governing Body.

Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Acceptable Usage Policy (e safety) FS/KS1
- Acceptable Usage Policy (e safety) KS2
- Admissions 2018
- Admissions 2019
- Allergy Policy
- Anti-bullying
- Attendance
- Before and After School care
- Behaviour and discipline
- Complaints
- Data Protection
- Equality Policy
- E safety
- Freedom of information
- Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings
- Gloucestershire Code of Conduct and Confidential reporting (Whistle – blowing) for employees in educational establishments – April 2014
- Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board – Safeguarding children handbook – only available on line at www.gscb.org.uk/handbook
- Home school agreement
- Keeping children safe in education - DFE September '16
- Medicines in school
- Parent Conduct Policy
- Pupil privacy notice
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
- SRE Policy
- Volunteer Helpers

Specific Safeguarding issues

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. Further information on the issues below can be found on the NSPCC website (www.nspcc.org.uk) or schools and colleges can access broad government guidance via the gov.uk website.

- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see also below
- bullying including cyberbullying
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking
- MAPPA
- MARAC
- Medication

Offer of Early Help (Safeguarding)

Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. It means providing support as soon as a problem emerges. Consideration will be given to a referral to Children's social care if a child's situation does not appear to be improving. The school will use Gloucestershire's Levels of Intervention Guidance to help ensure children and families receive the right help at the right time.

At St. Mary's we offer the following early help to support our pupils and families:

- Talk to the pupil
- Talk to the parents if it is safe to do so
- Visit the home
- Refer to an outside agent for support
- Organise a Team around the Child multi-agency meeting
- Use the pre-assessment checklist to see if a My Plan + would benefit the child
- Use the child sexual exploitation screening tool
- Look at OPS
- Refer to social care
- Visit and liaise with pre-school settings prior to the pupil starting school
- Visit families in their homes prior to the pupil starting school
- Run weekly sessions for pre-school pupils and their parents
- Run an open day for pre-school families to visit the school
- Glos Healthy Living survey carried out – results analysed and actions identified

- Pupil voice action plan to identify actions needed after listening to surveys
- Safeguarding training for all staff
- Induction for new staff and volunteers using GSCB materials
- Deputy designated safeguarding lead taken CSE e learning course
- CSE screening tool available to all staff
- Deputy designated safeguarding lead taken FGM e learning course
- Regular TA and MDSA meetings are held to discuss issues and to pass on information
- Training for support staff and leaflets available
- Safeguarding notice board in staff room with leaflets relating to early help – FGM and alerts from Safeguarding board
- Poor attendance followed up by Pail with families visited in the home if necessary
- First aid training offered to teaching and support staff
- Funding for pupils to attend breakfast club to improve the start of the day
- Provision of breakfast club for Y6 pupils during SATs week.
- Funding for pupils to attend the after school club to help working parents.
- Attending core group and conference meetings
- My Plan/My Plan + trained member of staff
- Commissioning Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision to work with our MDSAs, inclusion workers and play-leader to improve skills and consistency.
- CYPS referrals and systems adhered to
- Permanency is considered for the child if there is an issue
- Counsellor commissioned for the parent and/or child if there is an emotional or family issue
- Play therapist and Art therapist commissioned to work 1:1 with children with emotional issues.
- Close relationship with community help – termly meetings at the surgery with health professionals
- Referral to Winston's wish for pupils with family bereavement.
- Aware of counselling service for pupil's who have a parent in prison
- Section 175 audit and action plan
- GSCB asked to come in and go over audit to ensure we are offering all we can
- Use the Gloucestershire Levels of intervention guidance to ensure families receive the right help at the right time.
- Signposting parents to support agencies
- Aware of GDAS and providing access to telephone for parents unable to use phones at home
- Aware of MASH
- Signed up to GSCB alerts
- Use Family Information Service
- Aware of labels and information from GSCB about suicide

Types of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts or injures you. Hitting, kicking, hair pulling, beating with objects, burning, throwing and shaking are all forms of physical abuse, and can cause pain, cuts, bruising, broken bones and sometimes even death. **No one has**

the right to hurt you in this way. Physical abuse can happen as a single event or over a longer period of time.

Emotional abuse

If someone is always telling you that you're ugly, fat, stupid, worthless, or that they wish you'd never been born, or being made to feel you have to be the best at everything, that's emotional abuse. It's wrong, even if they are not doing it on purpose. **It is also important to understand that this is not your fault.**

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is pressurised, forced, tricked or intimidated into taking part in any kind of sexual activity with an adult or another young person. This can include kissing, touching the young person's genitals (private parts) or breasts, intercourse or oral sex, looking at or taking part in pornography. It can happen to anyone - boys and girls. **If you are being sexually abused it's not your fault and you're not alone.**

Neglect

Neglect is when you are not being looked after or supported properly by your parents or carers (including foster parents or care staff, if you are in care). If the people who are supposed to look after you don't usually give you the important things you need, or make it hard for you to take care of yourself, then this is neglect.

Child sexual exploitation

When a child or young person under the age of 18 is in a relationship with an adult (over 18), even if they claim to be a friend /boyfriend, and if this person is offering something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gifts, money) in exchange for sexual activities, this is considered to be child exploitation.

Signs of abuse

Sexual abuse

Signs of sexual abuse may include:

- talking a lot about sex and giving detailed descriptions. Your friend may appear to know more about sex or sexual activities than you or your other friends the same age;
- becoming depressed and talking about harming themselves in some way;
- running away or talking about running away from home;
- having personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging;
- spending a lot of time alone and not 'joining in' with groups of friends;

- appearing a lot younger than they are - behaving like a 'baby' i.e. sucking their thumb or carrying around a cuddly toy;
- having a sudden loss of appetite or overeating;
- suddenly starting to draw sexually detailed pictures;
- not allowing anyone to touch them.

Physical abuse

Signs of physical abuse may include:

- unexplained injuries or burns;
- making up stories or refusing to explain their injuries;
- wearing a lot of clothes i.e. long sleeved tops; even in hot weather;
- not wanting to be watched undressing for PE or avoiding sports lessons;
- talking about running away;
- fear of doctors examination;
- aggressive or violent towards others;
- not wanting anyone to touch them;
- talking a lot about being punished at home for small problems such as not doing the washing up properly;
- being worried or afraid about people talking to their parents/ carers or family.

Emotional abuse

Signs of emotional abuse may include:

- delays surrounding physical, mental and emotional development;
- unusual difficulties in communicating or talking;
- putting themselves down constantly (i.e. I am stupid, ugly, worthless);
- overreaction to mistakes, punishing themselves if they get things wrong;
- extreme fear of any new situation;
- saying they deserve pain or bad things to happen to them;
- unusual behaviour i.e. rocking on chairs, hair twisting, self-harm;
- having no interest in anything or anyone;
- becoming aggressive;
- being pushed to be the best in school and sports beyond what they can or want to do.

Neglect

Signs of neglect may include:

- lack of food;
- poor personal hygiene;
- constant tiredness;
- poor state of clothing i.e. holes in clothes, old or dirty clothes;
- extreme loss of weight, or weight gain;
- constantly asking for things like food money;
- not having anything of their own in class i.e. books pens etc.