

Policy:	Child Protection
Date adopted:	September 2022
Date to be reviewed:	September 2023
Signed:	Ian Roe
Position:	Chair of Governors On behalf of the Full Governing Board

Our Nominated Governor for Safeguarding is

**Kaye Chittenden**

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

**David Dinsmore**  
**Jayne Lewis**

Our Deputy Safeguarding Leads are

**Lucy Murray**  
**Louise Wood**

# **Child Protection Policy**

## **Introduction**

The child protection policy for Dorchester Learning Centre is based on a template provided by the Dorset Safeguarding and Standards Team; it reflects the Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures (on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022.

This policy consists of four main documents:

- A. The overarching safeguarding policy (statement of principles)**
- B. Detailed child protection procedures**
- C. Child protection summary sheets**

These are provided to all adults who will not have the opportunity to read this policy in its entirety, but will have unsupervised contact, even as a 'one-off', with pupils on a temporary or intermittent basis such as supply, peripatetic or visiting professionals.

- D. Appendices containing DLC specific procedures**

## **Contents**

### **A Safeguarding Policy**

### **B Child Protection Procedures**

## **Sections**

- 1 What is child protection?
- 2 What is significant harm?
- 3 Purpose of these procedures
- 4 Responsibilities and roles
- 5 What is child abuse?
  - i) Physical
  - ii) Emotional
  - iii) Sexual
  - iv) Neglect
- 6 Recognising child abuse – signs and symptoms
- 7 "Child on child" sexual violence and sexual harassment
- 8 Pupils engaging in under-age sexual activity
- 9 Child sexual exploitation/criminal exploitation.
- 10 Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief
  - 10.1 Female genital mutilation
  - 10.2 Forced Marriage
  - 10.3 So called honour-based violence
  - 10.4 Radicalisation and Extremism
  - 10.5 Prevent
- 11 Children missing education
- 12 Responding to the child who discloses (talks about) abuse

- 13 Taking action
- 14 Responding to concerns reported by parents or others in the community
- 15 Remember
- 16 Response from Children's Social Care to a school referral
- 17 Responding to allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers
- 18 Children with special educational needs and who are disabled
- 19 Safer working Practice
- 20 Training
- 21 Raising concerns about safeguarding practice in our school
- 22 Information for parents' carers
- 23 Contextual Safeguarding

## **C Child Protection Summary sheet**

### **Appendices**

- 1 Useful contacts
- 2 Possible indicators of abuse
- 3 Record Keeping: Best Practice - to be read and followed by all DSL/DDSLs
- 4 Dorchester Learning Centre safeguarding information for classrooms
- 5 Daily attendance protocol
- 6 Dorchester Learning Centre: Safeguarding Induction
- 7 Reporting safeguarding concerns from the Kingfisher Ward, Dorset County Hospital

### **A. Safeguarding Policy**

Dorchester Learning Centre recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount. The needs and wishes of each child will be put first. Throughout this document, the term 'child' refers to a young person under the age of 18.

We take very seriously our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care and work hard to create a safeguarding culture.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018, HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's 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.

The Governing Body of Dorchester Learning Centre will act in accordance with Section 175/Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the supporting statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

The Governing Body is accountable for ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and that all policies, procedures and training are in place and effective.

It is a Dorset Safeguarding Standard (recommended by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board) that governors receive an annual report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Nominated Governor to help monitor compliance with statutory responsibilities.

***The Governors receive a safeguarding update from the DSL/DDSLS at each full Governors meeting. Safeguarding is also reviewed and discussed at every safeguarding subcommittee meeting.***

The Dorset Standards also recommends that each school and college complete and submits to the Safeguarding Children Board an annual audit of its safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including an action plan.

***Dorchester Learning Centre submits an audit annual including an action plan.***

All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their;

- age
- health or disability
- gender or sexual orientation
- race, religion, belief or first language
- political or immigration status

Governors, staff and regular volunteers in this school understand the importance of taking appropriate action and working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- afford protection for all pupils
- enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- promote a culture which makes this school a safe place to learn and in which children feel safe

This policy applies to the Headteacher and all staff, including supply and peripatetic staff, regular volunteers (i.e. those who come into school once a week or more or 4 times in a 30-day period), Governors or anyone working on behalf of the school.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- always acting in their best interests
- valuing them, listening to and respecting them

- involving them in decisions which affect them
- never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other forms of discrimination, including through use of technology
- ensuring the curriculum affords a range of opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe, particularly when using technology
- exercising our duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, by ensuring all staff attend 'Prevent' training in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour and by assessing the risk of our pupils being drawn into terrorism
- supporting attendance and taking action if a child is missing school regularly
- appointing a senior member of staff from our leadership team as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and ensuring this person has the time, funding, training, resources and support to perform the role effectively
- appointing at least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure there is always someone available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- appointing a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are Looked-After and to work closely with the virtual school head to discuss how pupil premium plus additional funding can support the progress of these children.

***At Dorchester Learning Centre, the Head teacher delegates this position of responsibility to a member of SLT who acts as the LAC champion***

***DLC LAC Champion is Emma Gould***

- ensuring that staff working with Looked-After Children have information appropriate to their role regarding, for example, the child's care arrangements, legal status and contact with birth parents
- promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care.
- making sure all staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the safeguarding policy and child protection procedures and also understand their individual responsibility to take action
- ensuring that all those named above (i.e. DSLs and Deputy DSLs; Designated Teacher; Headteacher, all staff and regular volunteers) have training appropriate to their roles as set out in statutory guidance or recommended by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board
- identifying any concerns early and providing appropriate help to prevent them from escalating, including working with parents/carers and other agencies as appropriate.

***DLC employs Family Workers who are responsible for supporting pupils who require additional care. The Family Workers liaise with local support networks, to implement the most suitable and effective interventions for individual students.***

- sharing information about child safeguarding concerns with agencies who need to know. Ensuring that children and their parents/carers are involved with all information sharing, as is appropriate.

***Parents/carers are invited into school on a regular basis to discuss concerns and monitor progress of interventions and discuss any support that could be provided.***

- acknowledging and actively promoting that multi-agency working is the best way to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

***DLC family workers attend local safeguarding networking meetings (such as the Youth at Risk meetings – YARS). The aim of these meetings is to share good practice and discuss worrying local and national trends, which may have an impact on DLC students.***

- taking the right action, in accordance with Dorset Safeguarding Children Board inter-agency safeguarding procedures, if a child discloses or there are indicators of abuse
- keeping clear, accurate and contemporaneous safeguarding and child protection records.

***DLC subscribes to the software MyConcern and all staff, including SLA staff, have logins and actively report concerns via this system.***

- recruiting staff and volunteers (including host families) safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements. At least one appointment panel member must have undertaken safer recruitment training
- providing effective management for staff through induction, support and regular update training appropriate to role.

***All new staff have a thorough safeguarding specific induction programme, which is signed off by the DSL/DDSL.***

***Safeguarding training is provided at every termly staff training day.***

***A safeguarding briefing is included in the daily staff briefing***

***During the weekly staff meeting a safeguarding topic is discussed with staff.***

***There is a safeguarding noticeboard in the staffroom with up to date information and resources for staff, including a safeguarding of the month slot.***

- adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- ensuring our online safety process includes appropriate filters and monitoring systems.

***Pupils are not allowed mobile phones in school, to support them in remaining safe online during school hours.***

***Parents receive the termly online safety newsletter and receive online safety information leaflets and support.***

***Staff are aware that abuse can happen to pupils online and that pupils need support and advice to keep safe online.***

- ensuring staff and volunteers understand about ‘whistle blowing’
- ensuring staff know how to escalate concerns about pupils or staff if they think the right action has not been taken to safeguard children
- promoting a culture in which staff feel able to report to senior leaders with what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour or breaches of the school Code of Conduct by their colleagues, having faith that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken
- dealing appropriately with any allegations/concerns about the behaviour of staff or volunteers in accordance with the process set out in statutory guidance
- ensuring that staff are aware that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children

This child protection policy, forms part of a suite of policies and other documents which relate to the wider safeguarding responsibilities of the school. All staff are required to read these policies on an annual basis, signing a declaration to say that they have read and understood the policies. In particular, this child protection policy should be read in conjunction with;

- staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)
- e-safety policies for pupils and staff, which include use of mobile technology
- safer recruitment policy and procedures
- procedures to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers, including referring to the Disclosure and Barring Service (when appropriate)
- whistle blowing policy
- procedures to respond appropriately when children are missing education
- anti-bullying procedures
- C-card distribution procedure

***These policies and procedures are found on the school website, on the shared “t drive” and in hard copies in the pastoral office.***

***All staff are required to sign annually to confirm that they have read and understood these policies.***

## **B. Child Protection Procedures**



These procedures should be read in conjunction with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part One: Information for all School and College Staff' 2022, plus Annex A.

## **1. What is Child Protection?**

1.1 Child protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

## **2. What is significant harm?**

2.1 The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and, in each case, require discussion with the statutory agencies: Children's Social Care and Police.

## **3. Purpose of these procedures**

3.1 These procedures explain what action should be taken if there are concerns that a child is or might be suffering harm. A 'child' is a person under 18 years but the principles of these procedures apply to all pupils at this school, including those over 18.

## **4. Responsibilities and roles**

4.1 All adults in the school have an individual responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by taking appropriate action. This includes taking action where there are child protection concerns.

4.2 Governing bodies are accountable for ensuring their school has an effective child protection policy which should be reviewed annually and available publicly, such as on the school website.

4.3 The statutory safeguarding guidance for schools: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' states that all schools and colleges should have 'a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility' for safeguarding.

The person who takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding on the governing body of this school is **Kaye Chittenden**.

4.4 This school has two Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL). This is the person who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding. The DSL should have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver. Any concerns about children should be discussed with/reported to the DSL or the deputy safeguarding leads, who will decide what action to take including referring to Children's Social Care or Police as appropriate. More

information about the DSL role can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads in the school are **David Dinsmore and Jayne Lewis**

The school also has two Deputy Safeguarding Leads, **Lucy Murray and Louise Wood**.

4.5 In addition, Dorset Children's Social Care can provide advice and guidance on safeguarding and child protection matters.

See Appendix 1 for contact details.

4.6 All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- DfE guidance (2022) – Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) – published by HM Government
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures & Guidance, accessed through the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website [www.dorsetlscb.co.uk](http://www.dorsetlscb.co.uk)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance (2015)

***4.7 Dorchester Learning Centre has a designated teacher, appointed by the headteacher.***

The designated teacher must have up to date multi-agency working together to safeguard children (was safeguarding level 3) training and training as a designated teacher for children in care.

4.8 The designated teacher on commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, has the responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and those children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from the state care outside England and Wales.

4.9 A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have skills knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

4.10 The Designated teacher must have appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience.

Statutory guidance contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher.

## **5. What is child abuse?**

5.1 It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

i) **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.

ii) **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 the 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

iii) **Sexual abuse**

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

iv) **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance use. 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 caregivers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

5.2 It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

**As stated in KCSiE 2022, "All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation".**

## **6. Recognising child abuse – signs and symptoms**

6.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education is clear: 'All school and college staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection'.

6.2 Recognising child abuse is not always easy, and it is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. They do, however, have a clear individual responsibility to act if they have a concern about a child's welfare or safety or if a child talks about (discloses) abuse. They should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and always act in the best interests of the child.

6.3 Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should **always** speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) Any concerns about a child's welfare, should be acted upon immediately.

6.4 All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

6.5 All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

Appendix 2 details examples of possible indicators of each of the four kinds of abuse.

**KCSiE 2022 states that children are not always ready or able to talk about their experience of abuse, exploitation or neglect and may not recognise**

**that they are being abused. Staff should always have a professional curiosity around a child's experiences.**

## **7. Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment**

7.1 All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers. All staff should be clear about the school policy and procedure about child on child abuse.

7.2 Sexual violence and harassment can occur between two children of any age or sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

7.3 The school or colleges initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that **all** victims are reassured and that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

7.4 Ultimately, any decisions are for the school or college to make on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL or deputy taking a lead role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children social care and the police as required.

7.5 Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Pre-planning and effective policies will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

7.6 Following a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering;

- The victim
- The alleged perpetrator
- All the other children (if appropriate adult students and staff)

7.7 Schools need to consider the following options for managing a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment;

- Manage internally
- Early Help
- Safeguarding children – referral to children social care
- Reporting to the Police – in parallel to children's social care

7.8 If children require safeguarding and a referral to Children's Social Care is made the process for managing sexually harmful behaviour can be found in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the DSCB website. In brief, a multi-agency meeting should be convened by Children's Social Care following a referral and an action plan agreed.

7.9 A school risk assessment will be put in place, preferably by way of a meeting, which will consider;

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed
- The nature of the alleged incident

- The ages of the children involved
- The developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children
- Is the incident a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse?
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, school or college staff?
- Contextual safeguarding
- 

All staff should act in the best interests of the child

7.10 All staff should be aware of that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to;

- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violent rituals
- Upskirting

All staff should be clear on the schools or colleges policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse.

7.11 Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as 'normal' between young people and should not develop high thresholds before acting.

7.12 As there may be delays to a criminal process, schools and colleges should not wait for the outcome before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children in the school or college.

7.13 Schools need to manage the balance between supporting the victim and ensuring the alleged perpetrator has an education and safeguarding support themselves. Appropriate support should be ongoing basis to the victim.

***7.14 At Dorchester Learning Centre, we will not tolerate any child on child abuse, especially sexting. If staff are made aware of an incident of sexting, they report it to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL/DDSL will discuss the concern individually with the pupils concerned, in an appropriate and confidential manner. Support and words of advice will be offered to both the perpetrator and victim, as necessary. If the abuse continues or is of a serious nature, advice will be sought from Dorset Safer School Team/Dorset Police.***

***Staff are also trained to support pupils who have suffered from sexualised child on child abuse including abuse in intimate personal relationships or non-consensual sexual activity.***

***Prejudice based and discriminatory bullying are also forms of child on child abuse that DLC will not tolerate.***

***A victim of any form of abuse will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe, and given additional pastoral support.***

***Dorchester Learning Centre aims to work proactively to minimise the risk of child on child abuse. It does this in several ways;***

***Pupils are not allowed mobile phones in school, to help support them in keeping safe online and with social media;***

***Staff are encouraged to bring safeguarding training into all lessons, so that pupils are immersed into a curriculum based around safeguarding;***

***Tutors regularly discuss key issues such as respect, rights and responsibilities;***

***Other agencies are invited into DLC to support our pupils (including sexual health nurses, Chelsea's Choice, Dorset Police Safer Schools team, counsellors and youth workers).***

***Any young people who shows concern around peer abuse, either as a victim or perpetrator, are given individual support and a risk assessment is completed if deemed necessary.***

***DLC staff are trained in contextual safeguarding and keep this in mind when supporting students.***

7.15 Upskirting is now considered to be abuse and is a criminal offence. This involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing. ***This will not be tolerated at DLC and all reports of upskirting will be reported to the appropriate authorities.***

***7.16 Lucy Murray is the DLC online champion, and provided support to pupils and carers, regarding keeping safe online***

## **8. Pupils engaging in under-age sexual activity**

8.1 Sexual activity where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of young people who are *consenting partners of a similar age* is not usual. Designated Safeguarding Leads will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether to refer or take advice from social workers, considering such things as any imbalance of power, wide difference in ages or developmental stages etc.

8.2 Where a child is under the age of 13 penetrative sex is classified as rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 so must be reported to social workers in every case.

8.3 The inter-agency safeguarding procedures, on the DSCB website, have more information about under-age sexual activity.

***DSL Jayne Lewis has completed the training to become a C-Card holder, enabling DLC students to access condoms at school, in a controlled and supportive manner.***

***Please see C-card procedure for more information.***

***DLC also supports students to keep safe and educated regarding their sexual health, by taking students to Weymouth sexual health clinic.***

## **9. Child sexual exploitation/Criminal exploitation**

9.1 As stated in KCSiE 2022, “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 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”.

This form of abuse involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money, mobile phones) as a result of their performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual acts. It can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

9.2 Recognition of child sexual exploitation is part of staff training. We note that any child or young person may be at risk of this form of abuse, regardless of family background or other circumstances, and can experience significant harm to physical and mental health.

***DDSL Jayne Lewis has had specific Level 3 CSE training and is available to other staff for consultation.***

***DLC recognises that CSE/CCE is potentially a very real situation for a number of its pupils. As such, pupils who are deemed to be at risk, are monitored closely by all staff, but especially by the safeguarding team.***

9.3 Due to the grooming methods used by abusers, it is common for young people not to recognise they are being abused and may feel they are ‘in a relationship’ and acting voluntarily.

***CSE/CCE is discussed with parents and pupils, when necessary and in an appropriate and non-judgemental way.***

***Support is given to all pupils who may be concerned about such exploitation.***

***Dorchester Learning Centre also encourages staff to raise these difficult areas in all subjects, so that pupils are made aware of potential grooming situations and are aware of what to do if they have concerns about themselves or a fellow pupil.***



9.4 “County Lines” is becoming widely recognised and is used to describe criminal exploitation of young people using the internal trafficking of young people for criminal exploitation. Young people are groomed using the same techniques as above, with them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals which is of a criminal nature.

Children are “trafficked” as part of the exploitation. They have their transport arranged for them for the purpose of selling drugs, firearms or sex. Young people will go missing for extended periods of time, missing education and moving away from their friendship groups.

***Dorchester Learning Centre staff are aware of this method of exploitation and are actively seeking to support any pupil who may be the target of such criminality.***

***Dorchester Learning Centre liaise closely with safer schools, children’s social services, share relevant information with other schools and attend multi agency briefings based around child exploitation.***

***Dorchester Learning Centre has trained all staff members and relevant Governors in child exploitation using the services of Escapeline.***

***DSL Jayne Lewis has attended CCE/County Line/FGM training and is the CCE/CSE champion for DLC***

9.5 Any concerns about child sexual exploitation/criminal exploitation will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will take appropriate action which might include completing a risk assessment form. The form and more detailed local procedures are in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the DSCB website.

## **10. Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief**

All staff in this school will promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Some forms of abuse are linked to these and staff should strive to suspend professional disbelief (i.e. that they ‘could not happen here’) and to report promptly any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will seek further advice from statutory agencies, prior to contacting parents/carers.

**10.1 Female Genital Mutilation** is illegal and involves intentionally altering or injuring female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It can have serious and long-lasting implications for physical health and emotional well-being. Possible indicators include taking a girl out of school / country for a prolonged period or talk of a ‘special procedure’ or celebration. In addition to reporting any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, teachers (along with regulated health and social care professionals) have a statutory duty to report personally to the Police if they discover that female genital mutilation has or appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

**10.2 Forced Marriage** is also illegal and occurs where one or both people do not or, in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot consent to the

marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is not the same as arranged marriage. Young people at risk of forced marriage might have their freedom unreasonably restricted or being 'monitored' by siblings. There might be a request for extended absence from school or might not return from a holiday abroad. We recognise that school staff can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

**10.3 So called 'honour-based' violence** is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It can exist in all communities and cultures and occurs when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Females are predominantly, but not exclusively, the victims and the violence is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family or community members. All forms of so called honour-based violence are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and should be referred accordingly. However, there are some significant differences in the immediate response required as involving families in cases of forced marriage is dangerous:

- It may increase the risk of serious harm to the victim. Experience shows that the family may punish them for seeking help;
- Relatives, friends, community leaders and neighbours should not be used as interpreters – despite any reassurances from this known person.

Honour based violence also includes Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation.

***DSL Jayne Lewis has attended FGM training***

#### **10.4 Radicalisation and extremism**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism is defined by HM Government as 'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

In this school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to share their views and to understand that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

We recognise that children with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our pupils with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

Children are taught about how to stay safe when using the Internet and are encouraged to recognise that people are not always who they say they are online. They are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the Internet.

Any concerns about pupils becoming radicalised or being drawn into extremism will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will *not* speak to parents/carers or other family members at this stage but will take prompt advice from the Police.

*At Dorchester Learning Centre, DSL, Jayne Lewis, has attended advanced radicalisation and extremism training and their knowledge is shared with all staff, as necessary.*

## **10.5 Prevent**

Prevent is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. Prevent is part of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Prevent strategy responds to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views;

- Provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. It ensures they are given appropriate advice and support
- Works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to deal with.
- Prevent covers all forms of terrorism and extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism.

The Home Office works with local authorities, a wide range of government departments, and community organisations to deliver the Prevent strategy. The police play a significant role in Prevent, in much the same way as they do when taking a preventative approach to other crimes.

- The main aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism.
- At the heart of Prevent is safeguarding children and adults. Providing early intervention to protect and divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity is crucial.
- Prevent addresses all forms of extremism but continues to ensure resources and effort are allocated on the basis of threats to our national security.

Any individuals who are identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation are referred to a multi-agency Channel Panel. This ensures the appropriate interventions are put in place to protect the individual. Like child protection, Channel is a multi-agency safeguarding programme run in every local authority

in England and Wales. It works to support vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. It provides a range of support such as mentoring, counselling, assistance with employment etc. Where pupils at this school are being discussed, the DSL or Headteacher will attend the Panel meetings.

Channel is about early intervention to protect vulnerable people from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity and addresses all types of extremism.

***Staff and governors in this school have either attended a WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) session or have completed on-line Prevent training. As part of staff safeguarding induction process, all staff are required to complete the online Prevent training.***

***All DLC staff renewed PREVENT training online, during February 2022, and this is updated every two years. All new staff have to complete online PREVENT training as part of their induction.***

To referrer email [MASH@dorset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:MASH@dorset.pnn.police.uk)

## **11. Children missing education**

### **Emergency contacts**

***Where reasonably possible, Dorchester Learning Centre holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This allows the school a greater opportunity to contact a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.***

11.1 We recognise that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including the specific types of abuse detailed above including child criminal exploitation /or travelling to conflict zones.

11.2 Therefore all staff will follow the school's procedure for dealing with unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify vulnerable pupils and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

11.3 Actions could include involving other professionals and, if any of the criteria are met, informing the local authority where a pupil's name has been removed from the school roll.

**11.4 Dorchester Learning Centre has an attendance policy and procedure that all staff must follow, on a daily basis. Details are in the appendix 5. The school also has a procedure for children missing education, that staff are all aware of and expected to follow. This is also detailed in the appendix.**

**Staff at Dorchester Learning Centre submit timely CME referrals. Dorset County Council released an updated Children Missing Education Policy in June 2022, which Dorchester Learning Centre follow.**

There is more information about specific safeguarding issues including links to websites in Part one and Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022.

## **12. Responding to the child who discloses (talks about) abuse**

All staff and volunteers have been trained to:

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Avoid showing shock or disbelief
- Observe the child's demeanour
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that the information will need to be shared with others. They will not promise to keep the information confidential or a 'secret'
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace and not interrupt if the child is freely recalling events. They will not stop him/her to find a 'witness' as this could inhibit the child from saying more
- Avoid asking questions or pressing for more information. Ask for clarification only. If questions are necessary they should be framed an open manner and not 'lead' the child in any way: Tell me.... Explain.... Describe...(TED)
- Reassure the child, if necessary, that s/he has done the right thing by talking about it
- Explain what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared
- Not ask the child to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school – including the DSL - or ask him/her or any other children who were present to write a written account or 'statement'

## **13. Taking action**

13.1 If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.

13.2 Where physical injuries have been observed, these will be carefully noted but not photographed. The staff member will not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the child's body.

13.3 Any disclosure or indicators of abuse will be reported verbally to the DSL or Deputy straightaway if the student is at risk of immediate harm. If a DSL/DDSL is not available, and concerns are immediate, ensure a referral is made without delay to Children's Social Care or Dorset ChADS if out of hours. If the student is not at immediate risk of harm, the staff member must complete a MyConcern report as soon as possible.

***Professionals who have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person in the Dorset area, can contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service. This is a dedicated line for professionals and can be contacted on 01305 228558.***

***The ChADS is a combination of an Early Help Hub and MASH which allows the ChADS to work together more efficiently by gathering information in one place to inform decision making.***

***It enables ChADS to work closely with its partners to identify the right level of support, assessment and intervention required to manage risk, meet children and their family's needs and avoid unnecessary escalation.***

***This ensures that DLC/ChADS meet the two key principles of effective safeguarding as defined by Working Together 2018. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part. We must also have a child-centred approach. This means that for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children. A consultant social worker will:***

- ***talk through the concerns***
- ***discuss what action is needed***
- ***help make sure the child receives the right support at the right time***

13.4 Where the child already has an allocated social worker, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team must be contacted promptly.

13.5 A written record will then be made, ideally on "myconcern", of what was said, including the child's own words, as soon as possible.

13.6 If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their views will be considered, the school has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and that of other children.

13.7 The DSL will decide whether to contact parents at this stage, judging whether to do so, it is necessary to consider if contacting the parents/carers is likely to place the child at risk of harm from their parent's/carers actions or reactions - for example in circumstances where there are concerns that a serious crime such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or induced illness has taken place. If in any doubt, the DSL or staff member will call children social care first and agree when parents/carers should be contacted and by whom. The reason for the decision not to contact parents first will be recorded in the child's school child protection file/on MyConcern.

13.8 A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.

13.9 Where there is no disclosure by a child, but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together and that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

13.10 The Dorset Safeguarding Children Board's 'Threshold Document' should be used to help clarify the pathway required for a child: whether concerns will be managed within the school; or with the help of other agencies as part of early help; or whether they require specialised support such as a social work assessment or referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

13.11 A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL should expect some feedback, although confidentiality might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome s/he can press for reconsideration and if following this, s/he still believes the correct action has not been taken, will refer the concerns directly to children social care.

## **14. Responding to concerns reported by parents or others in the community**

14.1 Occasionally parents or other people in the local community tell school staff about an incident in or accumulation of concerns they have about the family life of a child who is also a pupil at the school.

14.2 If the incident or concern relates to child protection, the information cannot be ignored, even if there are suspicions about the motives of the person making the report. Members of staff will therefore pass the information to the DSL in the usual way.

14.3 It is preferable if the parent / community member who witnessed or knows about the concerns or incident makes a call to Children's Social Care themselves as they will be better able to answer any questions. They can ask for their name not to be divulged if a visit is made to the family.

14.4 If the parent / community member refuses to make the referral, the DSL will clarify that s/he (the DSL) has a responsibility to do so and will also need to pass on to social workers how s/he is aware of the information.

14.5 This process also applies to parents / community members who are also school staff. As professionals who work with children they cannot be anonymous when making the referral but can ask for the situation to be managed sensitively and, if necessary, for their identity to be withheld from the family if it will cause difficulties in their private life.

## **15. Remember**

15.1 Any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, MUST be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option. Any suspicion or concerns will be reported without delay to the DSL or a Deputy. During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a Deputy should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. However, if for whatever reason they are not available, the staff member will discuss their concerns as soon as possible with either;

- another senior member of staff, or
- ChADS (Children's Advice and Duty Service)

Anyone can make a referral, not just the DSLs. Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding.

15.2 It is important that everyone in the school is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for making a judgement about whether abuse has occurred and should not conduct an 'investigation' to establish whether the child is telling the truth. That is a task for social workers and the Police following a referral to them of concern about a child. The role of school staff is to act promptly on the information received.

15.3 This applies regardless of the alleged 'perpetrator': whether the child raises concerns about a family member or someone outside school, a member of staff or another child/pupil.

15.4 A careful record will be made of what has been seen/heard that has led to the concerns and the date, time, location and people who were present. As far as possible, staff should record verbatim what was said and by whom. The record will be passed to the DSL and stored on *MyConcern* or in *their child protection file*.

15.5 The DSL will keep a record of the conversation with the duty worker and other social workers, noting what actions will be taken and by whom, giving the date and time of the referral. The referral will be confirmed in writing on the inter-agency referral form (available on the DSCB website) as soon as possible and at least within 48 hours. Any pre-existing assessments such as through the Common Assessment Framework should be attached.

15.6 A school child protection file will be started in the child's name, where the child is not already known to social workers. If a file already exists, the new information will be added to the chronology.

**See Appendix 3 below for detailed record keeping guidance.**

## **16. Response from Children's Social Care to a school referral**

- Referral

Once a referral is received by the team, a manager will decide on the next course of action within one working day. When there is concern that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, this will be decided more quickly, and a strategy discussion held with the Police and Health professionals and other agencies as appropriate (section 47 Children Act 1989).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be told within three working days of the outcome of the referral. If this does not happen s/he will contact the duty worker again.

- Assessment

All assessments should be planned and co-ordinated by qualified social worker. They should be holistic, involving other professionals, parents/carers and the children themselves as far as practicable.



Assessments should show analysis, be focused on outcomes and usually take no longer than 45 working days from the point of referral. School staff have a responsibility to contribute fully to the assessment.

- S47 Enquiries (regarding significant harm)

The process of the investigation is determined by the needs of the case, but the child/young person will always be part of that process and sometimes without parents' knowledge or permission. On occasions, this will mean the child/young person is jointly interviewed by the Police and social workers, sometimes at a special suite where a video-recording of the interview is made.

- The Child Protection Conference

If, following the S47 enquiries, the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference (CPC) will normally be convened. The CPC must be held within 15 days of the first strategy discussion and school staff will be invited to attend - normally the DSL or Headteacher. This person will produce a written report in the correct format (a pro forma is available on the DSCB website). This will be shared with the child/young person and his/her family before the conference is held. A copy will also be sent to the person chairing the initial CPC at least 24 hours in advance.

More information is in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures ('Child Protection Conferences') on the DSCB website.

If the DSL disagrees with the decisions made by social workers regarding the outcome of the referral, the conclusions of the assessment or any actions taken, the matter should be discussed and if necessary escalated to more senior managers (under the escalation policy available on the DSCB website), *particularly* if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

## **17. Responding to allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers**

17.1 Rigorous recruitment and selection procedures and adhering to the school's code of conduct and safer practice guidance will hopefully mean that there are relatively few allegations against or concerns about staff or volunteers. However, if a member of staff, or any other person, has any reason to believe that another adult has acted inappropriately or abused a child or young person, they will act by reporting to the Headteacher (not the DSL if this is a different person). Even though it may seem difficult to believe that a colleague may be unsuitable to work with children, the risk is far too serious for any member of staff to dismiss such a suspicion without acting.

17.2 If the allegation/concern is about the Headteacher the person with concerns will contact the Chair of Governors, ***Ian Roe (the school office/clerk can provide a phone number for Ian)*** or the Local Authority Designated Officer (also known as the LADO) in the Local Authority Safeguarding and Standards Team. See Appendix 1 below for contact details.

17.3 In all cases of allegations against staff or volunteers, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay and follow the correct procedures as set out in the separate school policy. This must comply with Part Four of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022.

## **18. Children with special educational needs and who are disabled**

18.1 Research shows that children with special educational needs and who are disabled are especially vulnerable to abuse and adults who work with them need to be vigilant and take extra care when interpreting apparent signs of abuse or neglect.

18.2 Additional barriers can exist for adults who work with such children, in respect of recognising abuse and neglect. These can include

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- Children with SEN and who are disabled can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

18.3 These child protection procedures will be followed if a child with special educational needs or who is disabled discloses abuse or there are indicators of abuse or neglect. There are no different or separate procedures for such children.

***To address these additional challenges Dorchester Learning Centre provides extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.***

18.4 Staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner always and in accordance with the school's intimate care policy.

## **19. Safer Working Practice**

19.1 All adults who come into contact with children at this school will behave at all times in a professional manner which secures the best outcomes for children and also prevents allegations being made. Detailed advice on safer working practice can be found in the school's Code of Conduct.

19.2 We promote a culture whereby members of the school community should feel able to raise with the Headteacher, or any member of the leadership team, any concerns about staff conduct. If the reporter feels that the issue has not been addressed they should contact someone outside of the school, such as the Chair of Governors or the LADO. (See Appendix 1 below for contact details.)

## **20. Training**

20.1 Child protection will be part of induction for all staff and regular volunteers new to the school. They will be given a copy of this policy, the Code of Conduct, details about the role of the DSL and part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: information for all school and college staff' plus Annex A if they work directly with children.

***All new staff have a safeguarding induction process, which when completed is signed off by a DSL/DDSL. This is kept in individual staff's personnel files and includes basic child protection training that equips individuals to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns about pupils.***

20.2 A proportional risk based approach will be taken regarding the level of information provided to all temporary staff and volunteers. As a minimum they will be provided with, and will be expected to follow, the child protection summary sheet which forms part of this policy.

20.3 Staff who do not have designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, will undertake suitable refresher training at appropriate intervals. The DSCB recommends this is at least every three years. ***However, Dorchester Learning Centre aims to complete whole school training every two years, with termly updates.***

20.4 All staff will have training in preventing radicalisation and extremism ('Prevent') – either by attending a Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) or completing an on-line course, followed by a discussion with the DSL. The DSL is the Prevent Lead and will attend WRAP.

20.5 In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates from the DSL as required, but at least annually. This will include learning from local and national serious cases when the learning becomes available.

20.6 When DSLs and Deputies take up the role they will attend enhanced multi agency working together to safeguard children (Level 3) training provided through the DSCB multi-agency course. They must be updated at 2 yearly intervals after that.

20.7 In addition, their knowledge and skills will be updated regularly - at least annually. These individuals are expected to take responsibility for their own learning about safeguarding and child protection by, for example: taking time to read and digest newsletters and relevant research articles; attending training offered by DSCB on matters such as domestic abuse, attachment and child sexual and criminal exploitation; completing on-line training on FGM; attending local DSL forums etc.

***Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 states: Designated Safeguarding Leads must help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or***

***college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.***

20.8 Designated Teachers for Looked-After Children (mandatory for maintained schools and academies; good practice in independent schools which have or likely to have Looked-After Children) will undertake appropriate training. In Dorset this is provided by the Virtual School for Children in Care.

See Appendix 1 for contact details.

20.9 Headteachers and at least one governor will complete safer recruitment training (mandatory in maintained schools; best practice in others) either through a multi-agency taught session or by completing the NSPCC on-line course.

20.10 It is recommended by the DSCB that all governors attend training, briefings or other input which equips them to understand fully and comply with their legal safeguarding duties as governors, set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022. Attendance includes those who also work with children and have attended child protection training in that role.

***20.11 All staff have been trained in Trauma Informed Schools, to ensure that they handle pupils in appropriate ways, to reduce the impact of any childhood trauma.***

## **21. Raising concerns about safeguarding practice in our school**

21.1 In this school we promote a culture where any staff or volunteers feel able to raise with the Headteacher any concerns about safeguarding or child protection practice.

21.2 Any issues which they have not been able to resolve with the Headteacher should be reported to the governors in the first instance. If they are still not satisfied they should approach the Director for Children's Services or, if the issue relates to the conduct of or allegation against a member of staff, should contact the Local Authority designated officer (also known as the LADO).

21.3 Staff should refer to the school's whistle-blowing policy for more information or can use the NSPCC whistle blowing helpline: 0800 0280285.

## **22. Information for parents and carers**

22.1 At this school we are committed to keeping our pupils safe. Our first priority is your child's welfare and we will usually discuss with you any concerns we have about your child. There might be rare occasions, however, when we must provide information to or consult other agencies such as Children's Social

Care before we contact you. This will include situations where we judge that to tell you first will or might put your child at risk of significant harm.

23.2 Our responsibilities are set out in this policy. It reflects statutory guidance and the Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures, which can be found on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website.

22.3 If you have any questions about this please speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead, **David Dinsmore or Jayne Lewis**

## 23 Contextual Safeguarding

### 23.1 What is contextual safeguarding?

Safeguarding incidents and or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of school or college and /or can occur between children outside of school or college. All staff especially the DSL or deputy should consider the context within which such incidents and or behaviour occur. This is contextual safeguarding and means assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the context of the abuse.

***Staff at Dorchester Learning Centre are trained to bring contextual safeguarding into all their dealings with students, being mindful of each student's background and home situation.***

***DLC has signed up to Operation Encompass, run by Dorset Police. Staff registered are David Dinsmore, Jayne Lewis and Lucy Murray.***

### 23.2 Mental Health and wellbeing

***Dorchester learning Centre has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its pupils. KCSiE 2022 states that "Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children***

***in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. Public Health England as produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people.***

***At Dorchester Learning Centre, staff have regular training at the weekly staff meetings, in wellbeing and mental health.***

***The website also has a dedicated mental health and wellbeing area, where Mentally Healthy School toolkits are posted at regular intervals.***

***DSL Jayne Lewis has attended Mental Health and Awareness Training for Schools, self harm and suicide training. She has completed Senior mental Health Lead Training.***

***All DLC staff receive training on ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)***

## **C. Child Protection Summary for all Visiting Professionals** **Dorchester Learning centre**

As an adult working directly with children in this school you have a duty of care towards all pupils. This means you must act at all times in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

It is your responsibility to keep your child protection training up to date; you might be asked for evidence of this.

You must follow the principles of safer working practice, which include use of technology – on no account should you contact or take images of pupils on personal equipment, including your mobile 'phone.

If the behaviour of another adult in the school gives rise to concern you must report it to the Headteacher.

If you have a concern about a child, particularly if you think s/he may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, it is your responsibility to share the information promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputies:

**DSL: David Dinsmore, Jayne Lewis**

**DDSL: Lucy Murray, Louise Wood**

The following is not an exhaustive list, but you might become concerned as a result of:

- Seeing a physical injury which you believe to be non-accidental
- Observing something in the appearance of a pupil which leads you to think his/her needs are being neglected
- A pupil telling you that s/he has been subjected to some form of abuse

In any of these circumstances you must write down what you observed or heard, date and sign the account and give it to the DSL or a Deputy.

If a pupil talks to you about (discloses) sexual or physical abuse you:

- Listen carefully without interruption, particularly if s/he is freely recalling significant events
- Only ask sufficient questions to clarify what you have heard. You might not need to ask anything but, if you do, you must not 'lead' the pupil in any way so should only ask 'open' questions
- Make it clear you are obliged to pass the information on, but only to those who need to know
- Tell the DSL or Deputy without delay
- Write an account of the disclosure as soon as you are able (definitely the same day), date and sign it and give it to the DSL.

Do not ask the pupil to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school, ask him/her or any other pupil to write a 'statement', or inform parents. You are not expected to make a judgement about whether the child is telling the truth.

**Remember** – share any concerns, don't keep them to yourself.

## **Useful Contacts**

**1) For all referrals (concerns about children, which require a social work assessment)**

**Dorset ChADS (Children's Advice and Duty Service), which incorporates the Early Help Hub and the MASH; 01305 228558**

**3) Out of Hours Service; 01202 738256**

**4) Dorset Safeguarding and Standards Team; 01305 221122**

The team comprises Children's Services managers and advisors including:

- The Education Safeguarding Standards Advisor who offers advice and support to schools in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO) to whom allegations against adults who work with children in education establishments must be reported

**5) Dorset Virtual School for Children in Care; 01305 225809**

**6) Dorset Governor Services (for governor safeguarding training); 01305 224382**

**7) Allocated social workers;**

West Dorset: 01308 425241

East Dorset: 01202 868224

North Dorset: 01258 474036

Weymouth/Portland (Chesil): 01305 762400

Purbeck: 01929 557000

Dorchester: 01305 224220

**CIC:** 01305 225809

**CWAD:** 01305 251414

**8) LADO:** [lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

## Possible Indicators of Abuse

The following information is not designed to turn school staff into experts but it will help them to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse. The examples below are not meant to form an exhaustive list; Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff will find it helpful to refer to Government advice 'What to do if you are worried about a child being abused' (2015) and the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website.

### i) Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of the body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which is less likely to have been caused accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or there are differing explanations. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different ethnic groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse can include:

- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape
- bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks, fingertips or a belt buckle

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness must be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse can include:

- cigarette burns
- adult bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched



- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- missing school
- running away from home

## ii) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear otherwise well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. *Children who live in households where there is domestic violence often suffer emotional abuse.* Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse can include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from parents' care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour, e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self-harm
- fear of parents being approached

## iii) Sexual Abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. It is important to remember that children can also be sexually abused by other children (i.e. those under 18)

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause concern, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to, taken seriously and appropriate action taken promptly.

The physical signs of sexual abuse can include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse can include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- missing school
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- alcohol / substance / drug use
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults or other children

#### **iv) Neglect**

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect can include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect can include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

It is important that adults in school recognise that providing compensatory care might address the immediate and presenting issue but could cover up or inhibit the recognition of neglect in all aspects of a child's life. Compensatory care is defined as 'providing a child or young person, on a regular basis, help or assistance with basic needs with the aim of redressing deficits in parental care'. This might involve, for example, providing each day a substitute set of clothing because those from home are dirty, or showering a child whose personal hygiene or presentation is such that it is affecting his/her interaction with peers. It does not include isolated or irregular support such as giving lunch money or washing a child who has had an 'accident'. If any adult in school finds s/he is regularly attending to one or more aspects of a child's basic needs then this will prompt a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The general rule is: the younger the child, the higher the risk in terms of their immediate health. However, serious neglect of older children and adolescents is often overlooked, on the assumption that they can care for themselves and have made a 'choice' to neglect themselves. Lack of engagement with services should be a potential indicator of neglect.

***Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.***

**School staff should be mindful of the above and discuss any concerns with the DSL/DDSL who will take the appropriate action in accordance with the inter-agency neglect guidance on the DSCB website.**

***DDSL Jayne Lewis has completed the Level 3 Neglect Training.***

## **Record Keeping: Best Practice** **To be read and followed by all DSLs and Deputies**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The importance of good, clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has been highlighted repeatedly in national and local Serious Case Reviews.

1.2 It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)'s responsibility to ensure that child protection files, access, storage and transfer meet the required professional standards as detailed in this document.

1.3 The common law of confidentiality, Data Protection and Human Rights principles must be adhered to when obtaining, processing or sharing personal or sensitive information or records. In summary, the Data Protection Act requires that records should be securely kept, accurate, relevant, up to date and kept for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which they were made.

1.4 Any electronic record keeping system should comply with the general standards set out below. (The 'My Concern' system in use in many local schools has been checked for compliance.)

### **2. Record to be made by an adult receiving a disclosure of abuse (when a child talks about abuse)**

2.1 This record should be made as soon as possible after the individual hearing the disclosure has reported it verbally to the DSL. The facts, not opinions (unless of relevance), should be accurately recorded in a non-judgemental way. It is important to remember that expressing an opinion as to whether the child is telling the truth is not helpful and can prejudice how a case proceeds.

2.2 The record should include:

- The child's name, gender and date of birth
- Date and time of the conversation
- What was the context and who was present during the disclosure?
- What did the child say? – verbatim if possible
- What questions were asked? – verbatim
- Responses to questions –verbatim
- Any observations concerning child's demeanour and any injuries
- The name of the person to whom the disclosure was reported
- Printed name and job title of the author, followed by signature and date

2.3 The record about a disclosure of abuse should be passed to the DSL and retained in the pupil's child protection file in its original and contemporaneous

form (as it could be used as evidence in court proceedings), even if later typed or if the information is incorporated into a report.

2.4 Schools should never ask pupils, regardless of their involvement in a child protection matter (i.e. the subject of an allegation, a witness or the alleged 'perpetrator'), to write out their 'statements' of what has happened. In some cases, this could have the unintended consequence of jeopardising a child protection investigation. This applies regardless of whether the incident(s) took place within or outside school.

### **3. Records kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

3.1 It is useful and recommended practice for school staff to have one standard pro forma for recording all 'welfare' and child protection concerns. **However, at Dorchester Learning Centre all concerns are put onto "myconcern" as soon as is possible.**

3.2 Once a concern has been passed to the DSL/DDSL, they will make a judgement about what action needs to be taken, in accordance with local inter-agency safeguarding procedures, using the Threshold Tool, if necessary. The decision about any action, whether a referral is made to Social Care, will be recorded clearly by the DSL.

3.3 Concerns which initially seem trivial may turn out to be vital pieces of information later, so it is important to give as much detail as possible. A concern raised may not progress further than a conversation by the DSL with the parent, or, at the other end of the scale, could lead to matters being heard in a court.

3.4 All 'lower level' / pastoral concerns about a child's welfare, which will generally have been discussed with parents/carers, are kept in the child's main file/timeline. These records should not be labelled 'child protection'.

3.5 It is never good practice to keep pupil welfare records in a diary or day-book system. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues relating to an individual pupil over a period of time are seen as a whole that a pattern can be identified indicating a child protection concern.

### **4. Starting a school child protection file**

4.1 A school child protection file does not necessarily mean that the pupil is or has been the subject of a child protection conference or plan. 'child protection file' denotes a high level of school concern which has warranted referral to/involvement of, and in most cases assessment by, child care social workers.

4.2 It is the responsibility of the DSL to start a school child protection file when a social worker is or was involved, e.g.: -

- a) A formal referral is made by the school to Children's Social Care on an inter-agency referral form or

- b) Social Care inform the school they have commenced an assessment in relation to a pupil resulting from information from another source or
- c) A child protection file is forwarded to the school by a previous school or pre-school attended by the pupil or
- d) A child who is in care/looked after transfers into the school or
- e) A pupil is privately fostered

**4.3 *Dorchester Learning Centre does not use 'family files'; each child should have his/her own record which includes information specific to him/her and which will be sent to the next school at the time of transfer. The names of siblings and/or other children who live in the household who also attend the school should be clearly noted on individual files.***

4.4 If two (or more) pupils at the school are referred to Social Care for the same concern (for example, an allegation of sexually harmful behaviour), then child protection files will be started on both/all pupils.

4.5 'Document wallet' type files are not ideal as the papers therein can easily fall out or get 'out of order'.

4.6 School child protection files are never 'closed' or de-categorised. Once a school has started a child protection file, the chronology is maintained so that any future concerns can be considered in the context of past events, even if Social Care ceases involvement.

4.7 Note - If there is an allocated social worker because a child is disabled or a young carer and there are no child protection concerns then a child protection file should not be started.

## **5. Adopted children**

5.1 When a pupil is admitted to a school in Reception class and parents provide the information that s/he was adopted prior to commencing education, this should be recorded with their permission on the main school file in order that appropriate support can be provided in future if necessary. In these situations, it is not necessary to start a child protection file **unless** the criteria described above (at 4.2a and 4.2b) also apply.

5.2 Some older adopted children will have school child protection files because they were initially in care/looked after and were subsequently adopted. During the period when the child is 'placed for adoption' (prior to an adoption order being made) any file that contains information that identifies both the birth family and the adoptive family must be classed as highly sensitive and this information should only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.

5.3 Once the adoption order has been made the DSL in the school that holds the child protection file must overhaul the file. The principle is that there must be nothing that identifies the child's birth name or the birth family. In sifting the file, it is acceptable to destroy documents that will continue to be held by other agencies: for example, child protection conference minutes and LAC review minutes which will be in Social Care records.

5.4 A chronology should be prepared that gives an overview of the information previously held in the file but **without giving the child's birth name or any details which would identify the birth family.**

5.5 The overhauled file should only contain the new chronology and any information that has originated from within school (for example concern forms). This file should now be in the child's new name, contain no information which identifies the birth name or birth family, will be held in the school as long as the child remains or sent onto a new school as described (at 9) below.

5.6 Please note that once a child is adopted, all school records, not just cp files, must be amended so that there is nothing which gives the birth name or identifies the birth family.

## **6. The format of child protection files**

6.1 It is helpful if individual files have a front sheet with key information about the pupil and contact details of parents/carers, social worker and any other relevant professionals.

6.2 If the child is Looked-After the front sheet should include important information about legal status, parental responsibility, arrangements for contact with birth parents and extended family, levels of authority delegated to carers and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

6.3 If a pupil is or was subject of a child protection plan or in care/looked after, this should be highlighted in some way to make it immediately obvious to anyone accessing the record.

6.4 It is a multi-agency standard that children's child protection files must have at the front an up to date chronology of *significant* incidents or events *and* subsequent actions/outcomes. Maintaining the chronology is an important part of the DSL role; it aids the DSL, Deputy and others to see the central issues 'at a glance' and helps to identify patterns of events and behaviours.

6.5 It should make sense as a 'stand-alone' document: anyone else reading the chronology should be able to follow easily what the concerns are/have been, whether the concerns have escalated and why, plus the actions taken by the school to support and protect the child. This will be particularly useful for DSLs in receiving schools when pupils transfer, for professionals involved in collating information for Serious Case Reviews and for parents/pupils/ex-pupils if they view the record.

6.6 Once a chronology is started it should be updated as appropriate even if Social Care later ceases involvement (see 4.6 above).

6.7 The file should be well organised and include, as appropriate, school 'concern forms', copies of correspondence, school reports to and minutes of child protection conferences, documents relating to children in care/'looked after' etc. The DSL will decide which relevant information which pre-dates the starting of the child protection file, such as CAF or other pastoral care documentation, will also be included.

## **7. Storage**

7.1 All records relating to child protection concerns are sensitive and confidential so will be kept in a secure (i.e. locked at all times) filing cabinet, separate from other school files, and accessible through the DSL, DDSL's and other senior staff in larger schools.

7.2 The pupil's general school file should be marked in some way (e.g. a yellow star) to indicate that a child protection file exists. All staff who may need to consult a child's school file should be made aware of what the symbol means and to speak to the DSL if necessary if they see this symbol and have concerns. For example, a member of the office staff who is looking in the main file for a parent's contact details because of unexplained absence might decide to report this to the DSL if they see the indicator, in case the absence is significant.

## **8. Sharing of and access to child protection records**

8.1 It is highly unlikely that all members of staff need to know the details of a child's situation, or that there should be widespread access to the records. Access to, and sharing of, information should be on a need-to-know basis, decided case by case. The DSL is the best person to decide this. Consideration must also be given to *what* needs to be shared. In general, the closer the day-to-day contact with the child, the more likely the need to have some information.

8.2 The child who is the subject of a child protection record has the right to access the file, *unless* to do so would affect his/her health or well-being or that of another person, or would be likely to prejudice a criminal investigation or a Section 47 assessment (which relates to significant harm) under the Children Act 1989.

8.3 Parents (i.e. those with parental responsibility in law) are entitled to see their child's child protection file, with the same exemptions as apply to the child's right to access the record. Note that an older pupil may be entitled to refuse access to the record by his/her parents. As a guide, this applies to pupils who are 12 years of age or above, if they are of normal development or maturity.

8.4 References by name to children other than the pupil who is the subject of the file should be removed when disclosing records, unless consent is obtained from the individual/s concerned (or their parents/carer on their behalf). Care



must be taken to ensure all identifying information is removed from the copy of the record to be shared.

8.5 Always seek advice from your legal advisor or Dorset Data Protection Officer (01305 225175) if there are any concerns or doubt about a child or parents reading records. However, it is generally good practice to share all information held unless there is a valid reason to withhold it, e.g. to do so would place the child or any other person at risk of harm. Any requests to see the child's record should be made in writing to give time for confidential information, such as any details of other pupils, to be removed.

8.6 In respect of requests from pupils or parents for information which wholly or partly consists of an educational record, access should be granted within 15 school days. This might be relevant to 'welfare' concerns in a main school file, for example. Viewing-only access to these records is free but it is reasonable to charge for copies on a sliding scale from £1 - £50 (maximum) depending on the number of pages.

8.7 However, should the request only seek access to a child protection file (which is not classed as an educational record), access should be granted within 40 calendar days. A discretionary maximum fee of £10 can be charged for viewing access to or a copy of a child protection record.

8.8 If the record to be disclosed contains information about an adult professional, that information can be disclosed if it relates to the performance by that person of their job or other official duties e.g. a reference to a teacher in their teaching role or a school nurse in their nursing role. However, if the reference refers to that individual's private life, it should be removed (unless this relates to a child protection matter which is relevant to the record to be disclosed).

8.9 Child protection information should not normally be shared with professionals other than those from Social Care, the Police, Health or the Local Authority. Ofsted and other school inspectors can view individual child protection files. Information should not be released to parents' solicitors on request; advice should be sought from the school's legal advisor in such cases.

8.10 Governors, including the Nominated Governor, should not access the records.

## **9. Transfer of child protection records**

9.1 When a pupil transfers to another school (including to a Learning Centre because of permanent exclusion) the DSL should inform the receiving school as soon as possible in person or by telephone that child protection records exist. The original records must be passed on either by hand or sent by recorded delivery, separate from the child's main school file. Care must be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible.

9.2 If the records are to be posted, they should be copied and these copies retained until there has been confirmation in writing that the originals have arrived at the new school. They can then be shredded.

9.3 Whether child protection files are passed on by hand or posted, there should be written evidence of the transfer (such as a form or slip of paper signed and dated by a member of staff at the receiving school.) This receipt should be retained by the originating school for 6 years (in line with guidance from the Records Management Society).

9.4 If the pupil is removed from the roll to be home educated, the school should pass the child protection file to the LA EHE Administrator and a receipt obtained as described above.

9.5 If a pupil with a child protection record leaves the school without a forwarding address and no contact is received from a new school the DSL should follow the school's Child Missing Education (CME) procedures. If there is reason to suspect the pupil is suffering harm then the DSL will refer to Social Care in the usual way.

9.6 If a child arrives in the school in an unplanned way and / or there are concerns about them from the outset, it is worth contacting the previous school for a discussion with the DSL. There might be a child protection file which has not been passed on.

9.7 School 'welfare' or pastoral records (i.e. where concerns or issues have been raised but there has been **no** referral to or involvement by a social worker) should also be passed on to the next school for their information and can be included in the main school file, for example. In respect of data protection, parents/carers should be made aware (either individually or through newsletters, for example) that information is transferred in this way to enable the next school to properly support their child. Most parents will understand the reason for this but if for whatever reason a parent disagrees with you passing on non-child protection documents, you should not do so.

## **10. 'Dual registered' pupils**

10.1 Where a pupil is on roll at the school and starts to attend a Learning Centre (LC), the chronology and other relevant information in the child protection file should be copied and passed to the DSL at the LC at the earliest opportunity. Because of the nature of such 'bespoke' arrangements for individual pupils, the two DSLs should agree on which one of them will keep the chronology updated and how best to communicate to each other significant events and issues in relation to that pupil.

## **11. Retention of records**

11.1 The school should retain the record for as long as the pupil remains in school and then transfer as described above.

11.2 Guidance from the Records Management Society is that when a pupil with a child protection record reaches statutory school leaving age (or where the pupil completed 6<sup>th</sup> form studies), the last school attended should keep the child protection file until the pupil's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. It should then be shredded (and a record kept of this having been done, date, and why).

11.3 The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse has instructed relevant organisations, including schools and colleges, that they should NOT destroy, for the foreseeable future, any of their records that could potentially come within the scope of the inquiry (i.e. any records relating to sexual abuse).

## **12. Electronic child protection records**

12.1 Electronic records must be password protected with access strictly controlled in the same way as paper records.

12.2 They should be in the same format as paper records (i.e. with well-maintained chronologies etc) so that they are up to date if/when printed, if necessary.

12.3 Electronic files must not be transferred electronically to other schools unless there is a secure system in place but should be printed in their entirety, linked with paper documentation such as conference minutes and transferred as described in section 9 above. When the receipt has been returned to confirm that the file has been received at the new school, the computer record should be deleted.

## **13. Sharing information with Further Education (FE) Colleges**

13.1 A protocol is in place with DSLs at FE colleges: at the start of each academic year they will send to secondary school DSLs a list of newly enrolled students who have previously attended the school, requesting any relevant information. Secondary school DSLs will use their professional judgement but should always disclose if a young person is in care/looked after, is or has been subject of a child protection plan or is assessed as posing a risk to themselves or other students.

13.2 Note this applies only to Dorset schools and FE Colleges with whom the protocol has been agreed.



## Safeguarding at Dorchester Learning Centre

**Dorchester Learning Centre recognises that the welfare of each child is paramount.**

**We take our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care extremely seriously.**

**Everyone working in this school has a duty of care towards all pupils.**

### **What to do if a child discloses a concern**

Listen carefully, using TED (Tell, Explain, Describe) to support the pupil.

Do not ask the child to write anything down and always use open questions.

Do not promise confidentiality, but explain that you need to pass the information on to those who need to know.

Complete a **MyConcern** report without delay and inform a Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL/DDSL).

### **What to do if you have a concern about a child**

Share the information promptly with a DSL/DDSL, via **MyConcern**.

If the concern is of an urgent nature, speak immediately to a DSL/DDSL.

If no DSL/DDSL is available, contact the ChADS (Children's Advice and Duty Service) 01305228558

### **What to do if you have concerns about an adult**

Share your concerns with the Headteacher, or in their absence the deputy headteacher.

If it is not appropriate to discuss the concern with either of these, contact the chair of governors (number available from office staff)

### **What to do if you have concerns about the Headteacher**

Inform the LADO

### **Keep yourself safe**

Be professional, avoid physical contact and being alone with a child, ensure you are visible to others

Comply with the staff code of conduct.

### **What is child abuse**

There are four main areas of abuse:

**Physical abuse:** deliberately hurting a child, causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns and cuts.

**Emotional abuse:** ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. This can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child, or isolate and ignore them.

**Sexual abuse:** when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities.

This does not have to be physical contact, but can occur online.

**Neglect:** Ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs.



**Please also be aware of:**

**Honour based violence:** used to describe violence committed within a family context and motivated by a need to restore standing within the community.

**Radicalisation:** a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideals.

**Female genital mutilation:** the cutting of part of the female genitals, as part of a ritual.

**Children missing education:** if you are concerned that a pupil is absent from school, please speak to the DSL/DDSL, who will implement the Attendance policy.

**Child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and county lines:** if you have any concerns that a pupil is being exploited in any way, please speak to the DSL/DDSL.

**Child on child abuse:** discuss any concerns with DSL/DDSL

**Safeguarding leads**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **David Dinsmore** (Headteacher), **Jayne Lewis**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Lucy Murray, Louise Wood**

**Where to find relevant policies**

All safeguarding policies can be found on *MyConcern* and in the pastoral office. Please read these on a regular basis.

**Specific safeguarding policies and procedures to be followed at all times**

Child Protection policy

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022)

Attendance policy

Children Missing in Education policy

Escalation procedures

Whistleblowing policy

Safer Internet Use policy

Staff Code of Conduct policy

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse policy

**Important contacts**

***Childrens social care team***

West Dorset: 01308 425241

Dorchester: 01305 224220

East Dorset: 01202 868224

Weymouth/Portland: 01305 762400

North Dorset: 01258474036

Purbeck: 01929 557000

Child in care team: 01305 225809

Children who are disabled (CWAD): 01305

251414

Dorset ChADS (Children's Advice and Duty Service) for professionals; 01305 228558, incorporating MASH (multi agency safeguarding hub) and Early Help

**Dorset Police:** 101 (non-emergency), 999 (emergency)

**Remember, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility... If in doubt, ASK.**

## Attendance protocol September 2022

Pupil has not attended DLC	
Office to send a T2P to parents/carers within one hour of expected attendance time	
Family worker to phone home, followed up by email (if appropriate)	
Continue for 5 days (daily T2P/phone calls)	
Social worker/dual reg school to be made aware	
DLC representative to visit home on 5 <sup>th</sup> day of non-attendance	
Day 10 of non-attendance family worker completes CME referral	
Checks with ChADS re contextual safeguarding concerns	
Second home visit.	
<b>Pupil has social worker</b>	<b>No social care involvement</b>
Professionals meeting called: 6-week plan drawn up	TAF called by DLC
DLC to visit home every 2 weeks	6-week plan drawn up
Other professional visits every 2 weeks	DLC visits every 2 weeks
Every 6 weeks, a professionals/safeguarding meeting held	Every 6 weeks a professionals meeting is held
6-week plan drawn up	6-week plan drawn up
<b>Low attendance procedure</b>	
Under 85% attendance initiates warning letter	
If attendance does not improve after 10 days, TAF to be held.	
Hannah to update attendance tracker sheet every Friday	
Attendance meeting held weekly	



## Dorchester Learning Centre: Safeguarding Induction

Staff member:

Start date:

Topic	Date completed	Signed
DBI (declaration of business interest) completed		
DBS completed/checked		
Induction with Pastoral Team (safeguarding)		
Introduction to CHADS		
Introduction to essential policies including Child Protection/Code of Conduct		
Introduction to staff wellbeing ie staff counselling service		
MyConcern briefing/login given		
Role of DSCB		
Role of DSL/DDSL		
Role of Governing Body in safeguarding		
Role of Staff in safeguarding		
Safer recruitment policy adhered to		
Summary of KCSiE: CCE/CSE FGM Mental health awareness for pupils		

Operation Encompass Child on child abuse Radicalisation		
Training to be completed: PREVENT training ACES training Trauma Informed School training		

O drive/pastoral support/safeguarding/admin/safeguarding procedures



**Kingfisher Ward,****Dorset County Hospital, safeguarding procedure**

DLC has additional responsibility for the education of school aged patients in attendance at Dorset County Hospital.

The school room, run by DLC, is situated in the Kingfisher Ward of the hospital.

The following procedures are followed when a safeguarding concern is highlighted by the school room staff:

<b>DLC hospital staff</b>	<b>DLC safeguarding team</b>	<b>Hospital safeguarding team</b>
Safeguarding concern is brought to the notice of the hospital room DLC staff	DLC safeguarding team liaise with hospital room staff to discuss the concern.	Liaise with hospital room staff and DLC safeguarding team
Hospital room DLC staff discuss the concern with the Kingfisher Ward safeguarding lead	DLC safeguarding team discuss with hospital safeguarding team the appropriate course of action and discuss actions	Take appropriate action according to hospital safeguarding protocol
Hospital room DLC staff also discuss the concern with DLC safeguarding team as soon as is possible.	DLC safeguarding team to take any necessary action and record on MyConcern	
Hospital room DLC staff complete a MyConcern report as soon as possible.		