



St Martin's School

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Statement

St Martin's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We recognise that keeping children and young people safe is paramount. Preventing those who might wish to harm or abuse children from engaging in area of responsibility at St Martin's, whether paid or voluntary, is a top priority. The whole School community is expected to share this commitment.

We realise that all staff; whether paid or voluntary; have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical or emotional harm. Children have the right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. Therefore, trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional neglect. *All staff are expected and encouraged to disclose and record any concerns without any fear of any recourse or consequences to them for their actions in doing so.*

Safeguarding is EVERYONE's responsibility, anyone with any concerns should speak in the first instance to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and in exceptional circumstances, should make a direct referral to Children's Social Care.

All staff are expected to pay due regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE); Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTTSC), What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015 and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2020) and must sign to having read part one of the DFES publication, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which now includes further information on 'Preventing Radicalisation' and duties in terms of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct (Staff Behaviour Policy) as well as other relevant policies such as *Anti-Bullying, Computer and Internet Acceptable Use, Confidentiality, Equal Opportunities, Data Protection, Safer Recruitment, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination, Behaviour and Health & Safety* amongst others.

Principles

- This school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care.

- The school will act in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)*; *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTTSC)* and *What to do if you are worried a Child is Being Abused 2015* to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at this school.
- All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their:
 - race, religion, first language or ethnicity
 - gender or sexuality
 - age
 - health or disability
 - political or immigration status
- All staff in this school are committed to fostering an ethos which:
 - encourages and supports parents/carers and works in partnership with them;
 - listens to and values pupils;
 - ensures all staff are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse, know the correct procedure for referring concerns or allegations and receive appropriate training/guidance to enable them to carry out these requirements;
 - maintains a safe school environment for all pupils;
- We recognise that because of their contact with and knowledge of the children or young people in their care, school staff are well placed to identify abuse and offer support.
- Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made by children will always be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
- The school recognises the importance of working with Social Care, the Police, Health Services and other services to promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm as expected in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)*.
- In addition the school understands the need to differentiate between safeguarding issues and those families who are just in need of extra support and guidance. For example arranging counselling or parent classes may be a more appropriate intervention.
- The school recognises that pupil on pupil abuse can occur. A bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding concern, where there is reasonable cause to suspect this.
- The school recognises that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators.
- The school recognises the importance of teaching children about Safeguarding and what to do if they feel worried or concerned about any matter pertaining to their health, safety and wellbeing. This is addressed in PSHE, class tutor group talks and specific visits from professionals such as Dorset police, visits to Streetwise and assembly talks.
- The school recognises the importance of teaching children about E-Safety, Cyber Bullying, remote learning and keeping themselves safe online. The school has a separate policy for mobile and smart technology, including management of access to 3G/4G. The school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect learners from harmful online material ensures that all members of their communities can develop appropriate understanding and skills to prepare them to respond to online safety issues.
- The school set out restrictions for the use of mobile phones and cameras in the Early Years setting:
- Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones in school while they are teaching and any use should be restricted to times when the children are not present. Staff are required to keep their phones switched off and in their bags while on duty. Mobile phones may be used in the staffroom or offices where children are not present. The only exception to this is in the case of an emergency during a school outing.
- Staff do not use their mobile phones to take images of children, for example on a school outing. The school has devices available for this Personal mobile phones should not be visible while staff are teaching and moving around the indoor and outdoor areas.
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The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
 - Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
 - Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
 - Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)
- The school recognises the importance of promoting British values and working to prevent radicalisation, with due regard to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 as well as local Channel Panels. It understands the 'Prevent' duty guidance for schools.
 - This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation; no action will be taken knowingly which might undermine a criminal investigation. Investigating agencies are Children's Services Social Care and the Police.
 - Confidentiality will be maintained within the principles of the Data Protection Act, however St Martin's has the right to share any information regarding Safeguarding Children with other childcare professionals
 - Our recruitment and selection procedure includes all checks on staff suitability to have contact with children. The same recruitment procedures will be adopted for individuals who volunteer in school on a regular basis. As such, all staff members are required to undergo a number of security checks that include:
 - Full identifying details of the applicant, including current and former names, date of birth, current address and National Insurance number;
 - A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure with Barred List Check ;
 - Proof of any academic and/or vocational qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant to the position for which he/she is applying with details of the awarding body and date of award;
 - A full history of employment in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training, and part-time and voluntary work as well as full-time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training, and reasons for leaving employment;
 - Details of at least two referees;
 - Checks pertaining to disciplinary offences relating to children;
 - A signed Staff Suitability Declaration statement that the person is not disqualified from work with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body, and either has no convictions, cautions or bind-overs, or has attached details of their record in a sealed envelope marked confidential.
 - We will make it clear that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and possible referral to the police.
 - The proprietors will have an enhanced DBS check.
 - Teachers will be checked that they are not prohibited from teaching. Section 128 prohibition checks.
 - The Head teacher will be checked that they are not prohibited from management.
 - Voluntary helpers such as parents assisting on School trips on an ad hoc basis, are not required to undergo DBS checks, and they will be supervised by staff at all times. They will not be left to care for children alone. We realise anyone helping for more than 12 days in a year should undergo a DBS check.
 - Information will be recorded on the single central register.

Implementation of the Policy

All staff members are made aware of our Safeguarding Children Policy through an initial discussion of procedures during the staff induction and through on-going training and regular updates. These happen at least annually.

Staff have been updated since the publication of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTTSC)* and *What to do if you are worried a Child is Being Abused 2015*. They have been given copies of Part One and signed to say they have read and understood this. All new staff are issued with Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)* in their induction pack and also have to sign confirmation that this has been read and understood. The Head and all those who work directly with children should read Annex B.

Mrs Laura Richards, Headteacher, is the Senior Designated Person and responsible for EYFS, headteacher@stmartinsschool.net 01202292011, assisted by the Deputy Senior Designated Person, Mrs Kerri Male deputyhead@stmartinsschool.net 01202292011. Both these staff members are on the Senior Leadership Team and new staff are given their details and introduced to them personally as part of their induction. The SD Persons keep up to date with current legislation, details of Serious Case Reviews and attend intensive, regular training as is expected, given their significant responsibility for Safeguarding. The designated members of staff for safeguarding need to have safeguarding training every two years and their knowledge and skills should be refreshed at least annually. The safeguarding course and training includes prevent training. There is always a member of staff for Safeguarding available during the times St Martin's is open to discuss concerns with staff.

Mr Tim Shenton is the Safeguarding Proprietor. The safeguarding proprietor has annual meetings with the Headteacher to monitor and oversee the Safeguarding procedures, completes an annual safeguarding audit, in conjunction with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher also participates actively in promoting and upholding good practice in terms of the health, welfare and safety (including online safety) of the children in attendance at the school.

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council has a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to:

- ✓ be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases which meet the threshold;
- ✓ provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations;
- ✓ liaise with the police and other agencies;
- ✓ monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as
- ✓ quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

This LADO role is undertaken by personnel in Children's Social Care at Bournemouth Borough Council who can be contacted on [01202 817 600](tel:01202817600). Other useful contacts for reporting Safeguarding concerns are the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for concerns involving children.

- first response team: [01202 123 334](tel:01202123334) or childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
- out of hours' team: [01202 738 256](tel:01202738256).

In an emergency, or if there is believe a child is at immediate risk of harm, any member of staff should call the police via 999.

Parental consent is not required for referral to statutory agencies.

The Headteacher is also responsible to ensure that staff members have regular and appropriate training pertaining to Safeguarding Children, including Prevent and online safety, this is included on the Safeguarding course.

All staff must adhere to the following procedures and guidelines in the interests of protecting all who attend St Martin's:

- Staff are to treat pupils with respect, ensuring they are valued.
- Staff must challenge abusive behaviours identified amongst peers.
- Staff must be aware that unreported peer-on-peer abuse may be happening and it is their responsibility to recognise it.
- Staff are to avoid any inappropriate physical contact with children.

- Any concerns relating to Safeguarding Children must be reported to the Senior Designated Person at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Staff should be prepared to attend training/workshops that have to do with Safeguarding children.
- Staff will be asked whether they understand their responsibilities in terms of Safeguarding when they are appraised.

St Martin's aims to support the department of Social Care in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children and young people that attend the School.

St Martin's staff members should be aware of the possible indications of abuse or neglect and of the procedure for dealing with suspected cases.

St Martin's staff members should be alert to signs of radicalisation. Any concerns should be passed on to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, who will seek advice where necessary from the appropriate agencies in order to decide whether intervention or a referral is necessary.

What is child abuse?

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)*.

Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

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

Sexual abuse Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

We have a no tolerance approach to all types of abuse it will always be taken seriously and never passed off as just banter or just having a laugh, part of growing up or boys will be boys as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions; • associate with other children involved in exploitation;
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- misuse drugs and alcohol;

- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

CSE 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.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Note that **Cyber Choices** does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: [Cyber Choices](#), '[NPCC- When to call the Police](#)' and [National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. The Act’s provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children’s social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children’s social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances. The Department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: [here](#).

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies.

The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community.

The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk.

FGM is illegal in the UK.

On the 31 October 2015, it became mandatory for teachers to report known cases of FGM to the police. In these situations, the DSL and/or head will be informed and that the member of teaching staff has called the police to report suspicion that FGM has happened.

At no time will staff examine pupils to confirm this.

For cases where it is believed that a girl may be vulnerable to FGM or there is a concern that she may be about to be genitally mutilated the staff will inform the DSL who will report it as with any other child protection concern.

Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**.⁷ If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

Mental Health

All staff should 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. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

At St Martin's all Mental Health concerns are referred to the SENDCO or DSL, depending on level of concern and how the concern has been raised. The concern will be logged in the Safeguarding Folder. The child will be flagged for SEMH and added to the SEN register overview. Interventions will be put in place e.g. Bubble Talk Time and ELSA. Advice will be sought if school deem the level of concern suitable for outside agency involvement or referral.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online [child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Preventing radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism**¹⁹ is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation**²⁰ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism**²¹ is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or

protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard²² to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.²³ This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in colleges should familiarise themselves with the [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

The designated safeguarding lead should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme, and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

Additional support

The Department has published further advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are **robust, informed** and with **good intention**.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

[Educate Against Hate](#), is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#). This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The ETF Online Learning environment provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, support staff and governors/Board members outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

Recognition of Abuse

The lists that follow are not meant to be definitive but a general guide. It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour, such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family, relationship problems between parents/carers, undiagnosed medical conditions etc. However, any concerns should never be dismissed and staff should always confer with the Senior Designated Person, or Deputy Senior Designated Person regarding any concerns.

A child going missing from education or who runs away from home is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. This should not be ignored or dismissed, and staff should always confer with the Senior Designated Person, or Deputy Senior Designated Person to consider this.

The school will monitor closely, any children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

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 can almost only have been caused non-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 more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse 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 or fingertips

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 should be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse may 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
- running away from home

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear 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 can 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 may 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.

Sexual abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. 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 and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may 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

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse 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

- 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
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Neglect

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

The physical signs of neglect may 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 may 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.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

'Honour Based Violence' including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This can include abuse inside or outside of school or online. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; (which is now a criminal offence)
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in inter-personal relationships between peers.

Peer on peer abuse includes, but is not limited to, bullying (online and offline), gender/creed based violence, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals, sexual assaults and sexting and we recognise the increased vulnerability of children with SEND. It should always be dealt with as a safeguarding issue and should never be passed off as "banter" or "just a bit of fun". If a child is in immediate danger or at serious risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately following the school's safety policy.

Minimising Risk

KCSIE September 2021 states: 'Where there is a safeguarding concern, Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, any system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.'

We recognise the challenge that young people face in talking about such issues and so learning opportunities should aim to develop confidence in our pupils so that they feel they can communicate about safeguarding issues, including asking questions and disclosing concerns.

We believe that other underpinning preventative learning about issues such as consent, healthy relationships, online safety, recognising abusive and coercive behaviour may help to support learning about abuse.

When making decisions about how to deal with allegations, schools should take into consideration the age and understanding of the perpetrator, as well as any relevant personal circumstances and how this relates to his/her behaviour. Schools should also consider any disparity in age between the perpetrator and the victim, the impact the behaviour has had on the victim, and any element of coercion or violence. The views of the students and, where appropriate, parents, should be taken into account.

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Up-skirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence (KCSIE 2021)

Consensual and Non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (Also known as Sexting)

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Expected action taken from all staff

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

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved.

For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

Gather the Facts

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

Decide on your next course of action

If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

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

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

Informing parents

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. If a young person is deemed to be 'Gillick Competent' following the 'Fraser' guidelines and does not wish you to share the information with parents, then the school must consider this especially for example if the young person is pregnant and this is why they are being bullied (unless this has occurred through significant harm in which case a criminal/social care case is likely or the young person is under the age of 13).

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

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

Points to consider:

What is the age of the children involved?

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following)

Where did the incident or incidents take place?

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?

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

What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care.

Repetition

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

Next Steps

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

For the young person who has been harmed

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

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

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

For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

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

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying.

In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multiagency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour. The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

After care

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

Context

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

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment as well as their emotional well-being. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children, adult students and school and college staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

Policy

We believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other children.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and this will be dealt with under our child protection policy and in line with KCSiE (2021)

We are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up

We will minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse by:-

Prevention:

- Taking a whole school approach to safeguarding & child protection
- Providing training to staff
- Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence based content delivered through the curriculum.
- Engaging with specialist support and interventions.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Children making a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, kept safe and be well supported.
- If the report includes an online element staff will be mindful of the Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools (DfE 2018) guidance.

- Staff taking the report will inform the DSL or their Deputy as soon as practicably possible but at least within 24 hours.
- Staff taking a report will never promise confidentiality.
- Parents or carers will normally be informed (unless this would put the child at greater risk).
- If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care (01202 458101).

Risk Assessment:-

Staff need to report all concerns to the DSL. They may use any format to do this.

Following a report the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment on a case-by-case basis.

The Risk assessment will consider;

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator, their support needs and any discipline action.
- All other children at the school.
- The victim and the alleged perpetrator sharing classes and space at school.

The risk assessment will be recorded and kept under review.

Where there has been other professional intervention and/or other specialist risk assessments, these professional assessments will be used to inform the school's approach to supporting and protecting pupils.

Action: The DSL will consider:-

- The wishes of the victim.
- The nature of the incident including whether a crime has been committed and the harm caused.
- Ages of the children involved.
- Developmental stages of the children.
- Any power imbalance between the children.
- Any previous incidents.
- Ongoing risks.
- Other related issues or wider context.

Options: The DSL will manage the report with the following options:-

- Manage internally
- Early Help
- Refer to Children's Social Care
- Report to the police (generally in parallel with a referral to Social Care)

Ongoing Response:

- The DSL will manage each report on a case by case basis and will keep the risk assessment under review.
- Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- The DSL will consider how best to keep the victim and perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport where appropriate.
- Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school will take suitable action. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school or college would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).
- Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school or college will, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school or college, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school and college

premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and other witnesses (children & adults) will receive appropriate support and safeguards on a case-by-case basis.
- The school will take any disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator in line with behaviour and discipline in schools.
- The school recognises that taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions and will occur at the same time if necessary.

Physical Abuse

While a clear focus of peer on peer abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive.

These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, will be reported to the police.

The principles from the anti-bullying policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority.

References: –

KCSiE (DfE 2021)

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE 2021)

Pupils with SEND

The setting recognises that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect in this group of children.

Staff will be aware of the following:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the child's disability without further exploration; however it should never be assumed that a child's indicators relate only to their disability
- Pupils with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers

When reporting concerns or making referrals for children with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration.

When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a child with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's SENCO regarding a differentiated approach as well as the child's family where appropriate, to ensure that the child's needs are effectively met.

Responding to the child who makes an allegation

In the event of an allegation or disclosure being made the member of staff should:

- Remain calm. Do not transmit any shock or worry to the child.
- Listen rather than question. Let the child talk without interrupting if possible
- Accept what the child is saying
- Reassure the child that they are right to tell you and that you are there to support them but DO NOT offer confidentiality. Explain that some people need to know to keep the child (or others) safe.
- Respond sensitively and listen carefully but DO NOT jump to conclusions, ask leading questions (questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no') or answer for the child. This is important if a case becomes a criminal investigation. The responsibility for investigation lies with the police or Social Care. Use only the specific vocabulary used by the child in explaining the allegation.

- Record, in writing, at the earliest opportunity. Use the child's exact words or phrases. Quote the child's words where possible. Do not translate it into your own words and note what is fact, observation, allegation or opinion distinctly. (If you are needed to teach, cover will be arranged for you.)
- Record the time and date of the disclosure and also your report. Sign it and return it immediately to the Senior Designated Person, or Deputy Senior Designated Person and further advice or action will then be taken with Bournemouth Safeguarding Partners.
- Should a serious allegation be made, every effort must be made to protect the child which may require that the child is looked after in a safe and secure environment and without possible access to the individual(s) about whom the allegation refers.

Responding to Disclosures – guidance for staff – (see also Annex 1 Safeguarding Children Procedures – an information booklet for staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors)

St Martin's School differentiates between safeguarding children who have suffered or are likely to suffer harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. Procedures ensure correct reporting and agency involvement ensuring that:

Children who have suffered or are likely to suffer harm are reported directly to Children's Social Care immediately (at least within one working day) (at risk), or the police if a crime has been committed. For guidance on when to call the police please follow the NPCC link.

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

We are committed to recognising when children and families may need early intervention through Early Hub Help and will liaise and work with agencies to ensure they get the help they need. Children who require additional support from one or more agencies lead to inter-agency assessment by use of the "Common Assessment Framework" (CAF) and "Team around the Child" (TAC) approaches.

If a member of staff or volunteer suspects that a pupil is suffering abuse: The first priority is to ensure that the pupil is not in need of immediate medical attention. The matter must be passed to the DSL or a member of the Child Protection Team as soon as possible. The matter should not be dealt with on a purely personal basis. At all stages, written reports must be kept in the Office Safeguarding Welfare and Concern Folder.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to CSC and the Police immediately. Anyone can make a referral but please make sure the DSL is informed that a referral has been made. If a child is in need then a referral needs to be made to the DSL who will refer on to CSC.

Anyone can make a direct referral to Social Care, if they feel it necessary for the child's safety.

Parental consent for referral to statutory agencies is not required.

All children have access to a number of people they can contact if they feel the need to discuss anything which may be worrying them. These include, teachers, school nurse, independent listener, house staff and any other member of staff they feel comfortable talking to.

If a child wishes to confide in you the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- **Be honest.**
 - ➤ Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
 - ➤ Explain that you are likely to have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening.
- **Create a safe environment.**
 - ➤ Stay calm.

- ➤ Reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame.
 - ➤ Tell the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you.
 - ➤ Listen to the child and tell them that you believe them and are taking what is being said seriously.
- **Record on the exactly what the child has said to you and include;**
 - ➤ Child's name (address and date of birth will automatically be filled in)
 - ➤ Date and time of any incident
 - ➤ What the child said and what you said
 - ➤ Your observations e.g. child's behaviour and emotional state
 - ➤ Fill in the body map as required
 - ➤ Any action you took as a result of your concerns - specific information about who you spoke to, names, phone numbers and resulting actions
- **Be clear about what the child says and what you say.**
 - ➤ Do not interview the child and keep questions to a minimum.
 - ➤ Encourage the child to use his/her own words and do not try to lead them into giving particular answers.
- **Maintain confidentiality**
 - Only tell those people that it is necessary to inform.
- **Do not take sole responsibility**
 - ➤ Immediately consult your Designated Safeguarding Lead so that any appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary.
 - ➤ The Designated Safeguarding Lead should show these concerns to Social Care before the child goes home if still in school. A decision will be made by Social Care whether to convene a strategy meeting; undertake a social care or joint investigation or provide alternative services or advice. (See page 30.)
 - ➤ Although referrals to Social Care would normally be made by the DSL, any other individual with concerns can make a referral, and have the responsibility to follow up on the referral if not be informed of the outcome by CSE

The DSL will always discuss any concerns/disclosure or allegations with MASH or whomever for advice.

Social Care will advise about if and when to share information with parents if there are concerns that this may be putting the child more at risk.

Social Care referrals:

- Bournemouth: Telephone 01202 458101
- Poole: Telephone 01202 735046.
- The Police Safeguarding Investigation Team: Telephone 101 (switch board)

Subsequent Action

If appropriate, the Senior Designated Person, or Deputy Senior Designated Person will inform the Child Care Assessment Team Duty Officer at Bournemouth Children's Social Care promptly, unless the child about whom there are concerns already has an allocated social worker, in which case this person will be contacted without delay. *If the allegation is against an individual working at the school, the Senior Designated Person, or Deputy Senior Designated Person must contact the Bournemouth LADO within one working day.*

You can contact the Designated Officer's for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area at:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Telephone:

[01202 817 600](tel:01202817600)

Email:

LADO@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

[Full contact details for Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#)

This applies to all adults within a 'position of trust', whether they are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency employees or anyone working in a self-employed capacity.

Although some significant concerns may not meet the threshold listed above they may still require investigations and 'position of trust' meetings to take place with other professional agencies. If in doubt contact the LADO for guidance.

In addition, some concerns may relate to transference of risk or suitability, whereby inappropriate behaviour in a professional's private life, may pose concerns of children being at risk within their professional job roles.

Please note that the person referring the concern to the LADO should not undertake their own investigations with the individual or setting of concern, unless directed by the LADO, as this may interfere with or compromise subsequent criminal or social care investigations.

In an emergency, or if you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm, you should call the police via 999.

Other useful contacts for reporting safeguarding concerns

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for concerns involving children. Find our:

- first response team: [01202 123 334](tel:01202123334) or childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
- out of hours' team: [01202 738 256](tel:01202738256).
- After the initial discussion, the concern progresses to a stage called Allegations Management, a more formal LADO referral form will need to be completed.
- If the Allegations Management threshold is likely to be met, the LADO will schedule an initial 'Position of Trust' meeting, to include other relevant professional agencies. Further meetings may also be necessary thereafter, as the investigation progresses, to determine whether there is enough evidence for a substantiated outcome to be reached.
- The Initial 'Position of Trust' meeting may lead to a criminal investigation by the police, children's social care, and / or an internal disciplinary investigation by the organisation concerned e.g. regarding Standards of Care or Standards of Conduct issues.
- Typically, a meeting would consist of the organisation reporting the matter, Ofsted or similar regulatory organisation, the police, health, social care and the LADO service. Occasionally a decision is

made to have a combined strategy meeting with the police and key agencies, especially if there are children at immediate risk, or there are children involved within the accused staff members own family.

- The accused staff member would not be invited, or any representative at this stage of the proceedings. In the more complex meetings, a review evaluation meeting may be convened, but often the LADO will email all involved parties to confirm the outcome.
- For your written records, the LADO will send you an email detailing the discussion held regarding your concern, together with any advice and guidance they have offered to you.

If a criminal offence has been committed, the police should be called without delay.

A record of conversations should be kept, noting what actions will be taken and by whom, giving the date and time of the referral. The referral should be confirmed in writing on the inter-agency referral form as soon as possible. Once a child is referred, Children's Social Care will make an assessment of the child's needs.

Enquiries will be undertaken by Children's Social Care and possibly the Police. Staff may be required to provide statements and/or attend an initial Safeguarding Children Conference.

Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

Tel: 01305 221196

In general, school staff will discuss their concerns with parents/carers and advise them of any referrals to Children's Services Social Care, unless it is considered that to do so will place the child at risk of harm. Advice will be taken from the investigating agencies if there is any doubt.

The Senior Designated Person for safeguarding will assist the investigating agencies to make enquiries into concerns of child welfare. This will include ensuring this school is represented at Safeguarding Conferences and that information about the child is provided as required.

The Senior Designated Person for safeguarding will be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with other agencies and support services over safeguarding and other safeguarding issues.

Concerns About Staff Behaviour Towards Children

Local procedures plus the Government guidance in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTTSC)* will be followed.

The Headteacher must be informed immediately of any concerns or allegations about adults who work at St Martin's. Allegations against the DSL should be reported directly to the deputy DSL. The Headteacher will contact the LADO at Bournemouth Borough Council on [01202 817 600](tel:01202817600) about any allegations against staff. Where an allegation relates to a member of supply staff provided by an agency, the agency should be fully involved. The LADO will record the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken, which could include a referral to investigating agencies. (If the LADO is not available, there should be no delay in taking advice or referring to Children's Services Social Care.) Due recognition will be paid to the stress caused by such an allegation and appropriate skills deployed to balance the needs of the child and support for the member of staff. However, the needs of the child must take precedence.

Where the allegation is against the Headteacher, the proprietors should be informed. The Headteacher would not be informed. The proprietor would inform the LADO.

Where the allegation is against the Proprietors, the Headteacher should be informed. The Proprietors would not be informed. The Headteacher would inform the LADO.

The school is required to report promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any person, (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) with children, or would have been removed had he or she not left earlier.

In addition, the school has a duty to consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed for misconduct (or would have been dismissed had she/he not resigned first).

In order to minimise the risk of harm to children and of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with pupils the Headteacher should ensure that all staff are aware of safe working practice and follow guidelines on the use of control and physical restraint.

Supporting Children

We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself or find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our school will support all pupils by:

- encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment
- liaising and working together with all other agencies
- ensuring there is a named member of staff for 'Looked After' children
- victims should be taken seriously, kept safe and never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment

Pupils understand the systems in place and are confident to use them. They know to ask an adult for '2 minutes' of their time or a private chat. Teachers know to make time to discuss the concern with the child.

Record Keeping

Any member of staff or volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible, noting what was seen or said (recording the pupil's own words as far as possible) putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. Information should be recorded in non-judgmental, non-emotive terms. All records must be dated and signed.

All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

All records relating to safeguarding concerns will be kept in a secure place, do not form part of the pupil's educational records and are not required to be disclosed to parents/carers. Any requests from parents'/carers' solicitors to have records disclosed to them should be passed to one of the local authority solicitors for advice.

Files relating to concerns about pupils will include a chronology of incidents and subsequent actions/outcomes.

Staff must ensure that they monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of pupils on the Safeguarding Register and that they provide information as required by the social worker, the LA Officer for Safeguarding and the Education Social Work and Attendance Service. There should be agreement via the protection plan about at what point the social worker or another member of his/her team will be informed if a child on the Safeguarding Register is absent from school.

If a child moves from one school to another the Senior Designated Person for safeguarding should inform the receiving school immediately by telephone that safeguarding records exist. The original records must be passed on either by hand or sent by recorded delivery. In such cases it would be good practice to retain duplicate

records, as recommended by a recent serious case review (conducted when a child dies, and abuse or neglect are known or suspected). These duplicate records should be kept securely for 10 years.

It is recommended that a child's records are kept for 10 years after he/she leaves compulsory education.

Parental Involvement

This school is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all pupils.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the school's safeguarding policy and the policy will be accessible on the school website.

As previously stated, where possible, concerns about children should be discussed with parents/carers in the first instance, if this is deemed appropriate under the circumstances and there is no threat to the child and the Senior Designated Person should advise of the need to make referrals to the Children's Services Social Care local office, unless to do so would place the pupil at increased risk of significant harm.

Training

The Headteacher recognises the importance of safeguarding training for the Senior Designated Person and Deputy and for all other staff and volunteers in the school. Training for the Senior Designated Person and those who work directly with children is in accordance with Bournemouth children's social care agreed procedures and as outlined in Annex B of KCSIE.

The Senior Designated Person and Deputy will be expected to attend training events organised by the LA or the Safeguarding Partners. This person must have inter-agency training and receive 'refresher' training at least every two years.

Safeguarding must be part of induction training for all new staff and volunteers. Staff who do not have lead responsibility for safeguarding must have 'refresher' training at least every three years.

All staff have knowledge, skills and regular updates at least annually.

In terms of their induction training, all new staff receive information and training on this Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct including whistleblowing, Pupil behaviour policy, Low Level Concerns Policy, Missing Child Policy and they are issued with Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)* and also have to sign confirmation that this has been read and understood.

The Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that the school has an effective safeguarding policy and clear procedures in place, and that these are known to all members of staff (including supply staff) and volunteers. Newly appointed staff should read copies of the policy and procedures as part of their induction training.

The Headteacher will receive feedback on changes to the safeguarding policy or procedures; training undertaken by staff; safeguarding incidents/cases; and how safeguarding issues are addressed through the curriculum.

The Headteacher will review the Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis, this is overseen by the proprietors. There is an Headteacher Safeguarding report to the Proprietors a Safeguarding Audit and Proprietors meeting.

The Proprietors, supported by the Headteacher are responsible to ensure that staff members have regular and appropriate training pertaining to Safeguarding Children.

The Curriculum and Safeguarding in Relation to Other School Policies

The school places importance on the curriculum in the safeguarding of children to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives:

- developing pupil self-esteem
- developing communication skills
- informing about all aspects of risk
- developing strategies for self-protection
- developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults
- developing non-abusive behaviour and respect between pupils and adults

This safeguarding policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies such as: attendance, anti-bullying, health and safety, inclusion, equal opportunities, sex education, special educational needs, and staff discipline & grievance procedures.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

It is recognised that children with special educational needs and disabilities may be especially vulnerable to abuse and staff will be expected to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect.

Staff responsible for any intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and ensure the child's dignity is preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There will be close partnership with parents/carers.

Whistle blowing

At St Martin's we recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding, which may include the actions of colleagues. Any such concerns should be raised with the Headteacher, if possible or the Proprietors of the school. Staff are expected and encouraged to disclose and record any concerns without any fear of any recourse or consequences to them for their actions in doing so.

Extended Schools and After School Activities

Where the school provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for safeguarding will apply.

Where services or activities are provided by another body, using the school as a venue, the school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters as appropriate.

Policy Updated September 2022

Resources

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007260/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2021.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTTSC):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999239/SVSH_2021.pdf

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2020)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1019542/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1019542/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. St Martin's School is involved with Operation Encompass. More information about the scheme is available on the Operation Encompass website. <https://www.operationencompass.org/>