



# Heroes Centre LTD

## SAFEGUARDING, CHILD PROTECTION

**Jan 2024** (*Last Review July 2023*)

## **Key Contacts for Safeguarding and Child Protection Heroes Centre LTD:**

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Home Education Manager / First Aider:	Mrs Sabina Hussain
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**Heroes Centre LTD Walsall:**

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Telephone: 01922 322411

Primary Contact email: [info@heroestuitionltd.co.uk](mailto:info@heroestuitionltd.co.uk)

**What to do if you are concerned about the safety of a child or young person.**

Report a concern for a child:

If the child or young person is not at risk of being significantly harmed consider an Early Help response on 0300 555 2866 if you are unsure please view our right help, right time guidance.

More information about Early Help can be found on the Early Help pages.

If you suspect that a child or young person is being, or is at risk of being significantly harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must report this immediately:

During office hours (Monday – Thursday, 8.45am – 5.15pm Friday, 8.45am – 4.45pm) call Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: 0300 555 2866

Out of office hours (evenings, weekends and bank holidays) Emergency Response Team Telephone: 0300 555 2922

To make a child protection referral, please send all information to the MASH using the Electronic Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)

**If you believe a child is in immediate danger call the police on 999.**

Key Contacts:

Morag Manson – Safeguarding Coordinator (Education)

Telephone: 07342075937

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Belinda Crowshaw - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (Allegations against Staff)

Email for initial contact and referrals: [lado@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:lado@walsall.gov.uk)

Office number: 01922 652322 or Mobile: 07707151435

Email: [Belinda.Crowshaw@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Belinda.Crowshaw@walsall.gov.uk)

Based: Central and South Locality Hub

Birchills Street, Walsall, WS2 8NG

To report allegations made against a member of staff contact LADO or Ofsted

If you are concerned about extremism in Heroes Centre LTD, or if you think a child might be at risk of extremism, contact the helpline on 020 7340 7264 or [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)

## Related Guidance:

- [Alternative provision \(2013; Updated 2016\)](#)
- [Behaviour and discipline in schools \(2016; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#)
- [Counter-terrorism strategy \(CONTEST\) \(2018; Updated 2018\)](#)
- [Data protection: a toolkit for schools \(2018; Updated 2018\)](#)
- [Designated teacher for looked after children \(2018\)](#)
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(2018\)](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school \(2013\)](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England \(2017; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education \(2019\)](#)
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers \(2018\)](#)
- [Listening to and involving children and young people \(2014\)](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information \(2015; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Modern Slavery: how to identify and support victims \(2020; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(2016; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales \(2015; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(2013; Updated 2017\)](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after children \(2014; Updated 2018\)](#)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England \(2019; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations \(2019\)](#)
- [School Admissions Code \(2021\)](#)
- [School attendance: guidance for schools \(2020; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [School attendance: parental responsibility measures \(2015; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [School complaints procedures: guidance for schools \(2020; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School \(2018\)](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years \(2015; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(2021\)](#)
- [Supervision of activity with children \(2012\)](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(2015; Updated 2017\)](#)
- [Teaching online safety in schools \(2019\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools \(2014; Updated 2018\)](#)
- [The Teachers' Standards \(2011; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [UKCIS: Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes \(2020\)](#)
- [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(2013\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018; Updated 2020\)](#)

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding encompasses child protection, which is defined as actions taken to prevent children from experiencing or being at risk of significant harm. Abuse, a subset of maltreatment, entails causing harm or neglecting to prevent harm to a child. Various types of abuse exist, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

Neglect, one form of abuse, manifests as the ongoing failure to fulfill a child's fundamental physical and/or psychological requirements, with the potential to severely impede the child's health or development. Examples of neglect may include the persistent absence of adequate nutrition, supervision, or medical care.

**It is essential to note that the term "children" encompasses everyone below the age of 18.**

## Introduction and Purpose

At Heroes Centre LTD, we are unwavering in our commitment to safeguarding children, and we expect all staff and visitors to share this dedication. Our paramount priority is always to act in the best interest of the child.

Our objectives at Heroes Centre LTD are aligned to ensure the following:

- Timely Safeguarding Actions - Appropriate actions are taken promptly to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Staff Awareness and Understanding - All staff members are well-informed and fully comprehend their statutory responsibilities concerning safeguarding.
- Effective Staff Training - Staff undergo thorough training to effectively recognize and report safeguarding issues, fostering a culture of vigilance within our organization.
- Cultivating a Safeguarding Culture - A clear safeguarding culture is embedded, underpinning all relevant systems and processes. This commitment is sustained through ongoing vigilance. Within

this culture, we prioritize listening to children and incorporating their wishes into our decision-making processes.

By upholding these principles, Heroes Centre LTD endeavours to create a safe and nurturing environment for all children under our care, ensuring their well-being and fostering an atmosphere of trust and openness.

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff (including supply staff), trustees, ambassadors, guest speakers and volunteers and is consistent with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended to holiday activities (HAF) and off-site activities.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2023), children include everyone under the age of 18. Whilst we fully adhere to this statutory requirement, our duty of care remains in place in full until a child completes their educational provision with us. This extends from the beginning of the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 5 and therefore beyond the age of 18. In such cases, our practice does not change in relation to safeguarding all of our students. Therefore, where the policy refers to under the age of 18 as set out in legislation, the policy should also be read within this scope to meet in full our duty of care.

## **Legislation and Regulation**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, and the Department for Education (DfE) Governance Handbook . We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding partners. This policy meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques.
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the Police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

## **Policy Statement**

All children should be protected from risk of abuse/harm but it is important to recognise that some children potentially have an increased risk, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to students who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- Are in need of a social worker;
- Are young carers;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, faith and belief or no faith, age, gender identification; sexuality;
- Are pregnant or in receipt of paternity/maternity leave;
- Are married or in a civil partnership;
- Have English as an additional language;
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse, domestic abuse or poor mental health;
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual/criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation;
- Are asylum seekers;
- Are looked after or who have been previously looked after;
- Are privately fostered;
- Are children missing education;
- May be due to receive elective home education as formally requested by a parent/carer;
- Are children accessing alternative provision (AP).

## **Recognising abuse and taking action**

**Staff and volunteers must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.**

## If a child is in Immediate Danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the Police on 999 **immediately** if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm. Anyone can make a referral.

Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

We work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the children. Heroes Centre LTD will, where necessary, liaise with Police, any relevant external agency including GP, and make a referral to children's social care. Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence to their team manager.

The following link provides additional guidance for reporting child abuse to your local council:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

## How to make a Referral

When making a safeguarding referral, it's crucial to follow established procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals. Below are steps to guide you through the process:

**Recognize Signs of Safeguarding Concerns:**

Identify and understand signs or indicators that may suggest a safeguarding concern. This could include physical abuse, emotional distress, neglect, or any form of harm to a vulnerable individual.

**Gather Relevant Information:**

Collect detailed and factual information about the individual at risk, including their name, age, address, and specific details of the safeguarding concern. Note any disclosures made by the person involved.

**Assess the Level of Risk:**

Evaluate the level of risk and urgency associated with the safeguarding concern. Some situations may require immediate intervention, while others may necessitate ongoing support.

**Identify the Appropriate Safeguarding Agency:**

Determine the appropriate agency or organization responsible for handling safeguarding concerns. This could be a local social services department, a safeguarding team, or a relevant healthcare provider.

**Contact the Safeguarding Team or Agency:**

Reach out to the safeguarding team or agency using the designated contact methods, which may include a helpline, online reporting system, or a designated professional. Follow the established procedures for making a safeguarding referral.

**Provide Clear and Concise Information:**

Clearly articulate the safeguarding concerns, providing specific details about the individual at risk and the nature of the concern. Include any relevant background information that may assist in the assessment.

**Follow Confidentiality Protocols:**

Adhere to confidentiality protocols when making the referral. Only share information with individuals directly involved in the safeguarding process and avoid discussing details with others who are not part of the official response.

**Complete Necessary Forms or Documentation:**

If required, complete any necessary forms or documentation as part of the referral process. Provide accurate and comprehensive information to facilitate a thorough assessment.

**Obtain Consent, if Possible:**

If circumstances allow, obtain consent from the individual at risk before making the referral. In some situations, professionals may need to override confidentiality to ensure the person's safety.

**Follow-Up and Advocate:**

Follow up with the safeguarding team to ensure that the referral has been received and action is being taken. Advocate for the individual's safety and well-being throughout the process.

**Record Keeping:**

Keep detailed records of the referral, including dates, communication, and any feedback received. This documentation may be important for future reference or follow-up actions.

Always be aware of local and organizational policies regarding safeguarding referrals, and seek guidance if you are unsure about the appropriate steps to take. The safety and protection of the individual at risk should always be the top priority.

## **If a child makes a disclosure to you**

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them;
- Allow them time to talk freely, ask open questions only and do not ask leading questions;
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset; tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you;
- Do not tell them they should have told you sooner;
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on;
- Do not promise to keep it a secret;

- Speak directly to the DSL immediately. Please contact a member of the leadership team if you are unable to find a member of the safeguarding team;
- Record the conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts and do not put your own judgement on it. The record must include dates and times to ensure there is an accurate record; alternatively, if appropriate and there is immediate risk of harm, make a referral to children's social care and/or the Police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

## **If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM**

So-called honour based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. These are detailed below.

The Department for Education's (DfE 2023) Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Any teacher who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18, must immediately report this to the Police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

The duty above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff must inform the DSL if they have any concerns that a pupil may be having FGM surgery in the future in the UK but also abroad. Staff must not examine pupils.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow the local safeguarding procedures.

Section 6(1) of the FGM ACT 2003 states that 'girl includes woman'. Our duty does extend to all girls within our duty of care and reporting must also be in line with local safeguarding arrangements for child protection.

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM. Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place;
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out;
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues;

- Having unusual difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable;
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously);
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating;
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems; avoiding physical exercise or missing PE;
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period;
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour; being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations;
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem; talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider);
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin;
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out;
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues;
- Unexpected holiday abroad and rumours of surgery or rituals or traditions abroad; having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM;
- Having limited level of integration within UK society; confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman";
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period;
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM;
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion);
- Being unexpectedly absent from school or visiting a surgeon from another country who is visiting the UK; having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

## **If you have concerns about Extremism and Radicalisation**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Terrorism is an action

that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that all staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

The DSL will assess the risk of children in our academy being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our Local Safeguarding Partners.

If a child is not at immediate risk of harm, where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to the local authority children's social care directly if appropriate.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team. If there are concerns that the child is at risk of harm then a referral must be made to children's social care regardless of whether a Channel referral is deemed appropriate.

The Department for Education (DfE) also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, that academy staff and regional teams can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger;
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group;
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate <https://educateagainsthate.com/> and charity NSPCC say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves;
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance;
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy;
- Converting to a new religion;
- Isolating themselves from family and friends;
- Talking as if from a scripted speech;
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views;
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others;

- Increased levels of anger;
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use;
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions;
- Accessing extremist material online, including via social media platforms;
- Possessing extremist literature;
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join extremist organisations.

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

Staff must always take action if they are worried.

## **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological and can come from parents and other family members or elders in a particular religion.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place;
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer;
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk) ; refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

## **Breast Ironing**

Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa. Further information in relation to breast ironing can be found at [www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk](http://www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk).

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child-like' for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence.

Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their academy should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

## **Serious Violence**

As included in KCSIE 2023, all staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

- increased absence from school;
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;
- a significant decline in performance;
- signs of self-harm or significant change in well-being; • signs of assault or unexplained injuries;
- unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- exclusions or being permanently excluded
- having experienced maltreatment
- been involved in offending (i.e. robbery or theft)
- Being male

These could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Further advice can be provided in the Home Office's 2018 guidance documents: Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement and Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

## **Child Exploitation**

A form of abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual (CSE) or criminal (CCE) activity.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where children are used to complete criminal activity (a) in exchange for something they need (i.e. food/money), (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator, or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. This can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include county lines or children being forced to work in cannabis factories, forced to shoplift or pickpocket or to threaten other young people.

County lines is a form of CCE that refers to gangs or organised criminal networks exploiting children to transport illegal drugs/drug money into one or more importing areas (within the UK) using 'deal lines' (dedicated mobile phone lines). Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

It is acknowledged that experiences of girls and boys in relation to CCE can be different but both can exist and where this is the case, there is a higher risk of CSE.

If a member of staff suspects CSE or CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the Police, if appropriate.

Indicators of child exploitation can include a child:

- Appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Suffer from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant;
- Display inappropriate sexualised behaviour;
- Suffer from changes in emotional wellbeing;
- Misuse drugs and/or alcohol;
- Go missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late;
- Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education.

## **Domestic Abuse**

Staff will be made aware of The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that received royal assent on 29 April 2021.

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are personally connected. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

All children can see, hear or experience domestic abuse in the context of their home life. They are therefore victims in their own right. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting

emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

## **Online Safety**

Staff are made aware that technology is a significant component of safeguarding issues and abuse can take place concurrently online and in daily life. Online safety is an ongoing and interrelated theme that informs other policy and systems/processes.

The prevalence of issues arising through children's access to the online world is significant and all staff should be aware of associated risks and signs/symptoms. These are categorised within KCSIE 2021 as:

- Content
- Contact
- Conduct
- Commerce

This includes non-age-appropriate content, self-harm and suicide, sharing nudes or semi-nudes, cyberbullying, grooming, radicalisation, gaming (now identified by the World Health Organisation as a disorder), online gambling, inappropriate advertising and cybercrime. Our pupils will receive sessions to ensure they are aware of the risks associated above and how to report any concerns.

We will continue to follow advice from the DfE in relation to online safety where children are being asked to learn online from home.

Staff will receive annual training around online safety including the signs/symptoms for the 4 C's above as well as the signposting available to students in order to build their online resilience. We will also work with parents/carers to support them in how to keep their children safe online.

Academies will complete an annual review/risk assessment of their online safety provision to ensure continued good practice.

### **Filtering and Monitoring**

Officially, children should not be able to access harmful or inappropriate material from the Heroes Centre LTD IT system. However, currently, Heroes Centre LTD does not have any IT facilities in place. If an IT system is established, Heroes Centre LTD will need to "be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding." We recognise that no filter can be guaranteed to be 100% effective.

The filtering will have regard to:

- Discrimination – a web search that promotes the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people on the grounds of race, religion, age, sexuality, gender identity, disability; drugs/substance abuse - displays or promotes the illegal use of drugs or substances;

- Extremism - promotes terrorism and terrorist ideologies, violence or intolerance; malware/hacking - promotes the compromising of systems including anonymous browsing and other filter bypass tools as well as sites hosting malicious content;
- Pornography - displays sexual acts or explicit images; piracy and copyright theft - includes illegal provision of copyrighted material;
- Self-harm - promotes or displays deliberate self-harm (including suicide and eating disorders); violence - displays or promotes the use of physical force intended to hurt or kill.

The filtering system meets the following principles:

- Age appropriate, differentiated filtering – includes the ability to vary filtering strength appropriate to age and role; has the ability and ease of use that allows academies to control the filter themselves to permit or deny access to specific content;
- The filtering provider publishes a rationale that details their approach to filtering with classification and categorisation as well as over blocking;
- The filtering system has the ability to identify users;
- Mobile and App content – mobile and app content is often delivered in entirely different mechanisms from that delivered through a traditional web browser. To what extent does the filter system block inappropriate content via mobile and app technologies (beyond typical web browser delivered content);
- Multiple language support – the ability for the system to manage relevant languages. Network level filtering should be applied at ‘network level’ i.e., not reliant on any software on user devices;
- Reporting mechanism – the ability to report inappropriate content for access or blocking. Reports – the system offers clear historical information on the websites visited by your users.

We recognise that no monitoring can guarantee 100% effectiveness. Heroes Centre LTD will make sure that there are appropriate monitoring systems in place to check for:

- Content that is illegal, for example child abuse images and terrorist content;
- The repeated use of force, threat or coercion to abuse, intimidate or aggressively dominate others;
- Encouraging the child into a coercive/manipulative sexual relationship. This may include encouragement to meet;
- Promotes the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people on the grounds of race, religion, age, sex, sexuality, disability or gender identity;
- Displays or promotes the illegal use of drugs or substances;
- Promotes terrorism and terrorist ideologies, violence or intolerance;
- Displays sexual acts or explicit images;

- Promotes or displays deliberate self-harm; promotes the use of physical force intended to hurt or kill; suggest the user is considering suicide.

## **Mental Health**

Supporting all children's mental health is a key priority for the trust (and is specifically included within the KCSIE definition of 'safeguarding') and this includes preventing/acting on abuse caused by impairment of a child's mental health or development. All staff will be trained in the signs/symptoms of poor mental health and will record their concerns as well as informing the DSL immediately if they perceive that the child is at risk of harm (including through self-harm or suicide).

Poor mental health is an indicator of potential harm and potential adverse childhood experiences.

Training for staff will include being aware of this link.

Where staff have a mental health concern for a child where there are also safeguarding concerns then immediate action will be taken including the DSL liaising with appropriate support networks.

## **Extra-Familial Harms**

Safeguarding concerns can be associated with factors outside the home environment and all staff (but especially safeguarding teams) should be aware of the context that such concerns can occur. This includes issues that arise in an academy, between peers, within the local community or online. Children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.

Heroes Centre LTD will consider all potential harms when assessing the risk to a pupil.

**Private Fostering** - A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins. Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence. Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority. Heroes Centre LTD has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. The academy will make it clear who has parental responsibility. Heroes Centre LTD staff will notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the

child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. On admission to the Heroes Centre LTD, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

**Elective Home Education (EHE)** - In these circumstances the request will be recorded, a parental meeting completed to discuss the barriers to remaining on roll, the LA being informed in line with local procedures and a review of the request by the Regional Safeguarding Lead who provides authorisation if appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed in writing. Consultation with relevant external agencies will be completed as appropriate.

**Pupil Awareness** - All pupils will receive an age-appropriate personal development curriculum that ensures they are provided with effective information, support and signposting for all safeguarding areas. This includes delivery through the statutory RSHE guidance. Pupils will be taught about relevant risks, appropriate behaviour and how to report concerns.

## **Child Abduction/Community Safety/Modern Slavery**

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.

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. Signs/symptoms include: being unable to leave work, subjected to violence or threat, unexplained injuries, concerns over identity or other relevant documentation, being in a situation of dependence or perception of being bonded by debt, receiving little or no payment. We will complete a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) where we have concerns about a child in relation to modern slavery.

Staff will receive awareness training about these concerns and the work with pupils will be focused on practical advice to staying safe together with building confidence and resilience.

## **Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse**

### **Concerns about a staff member, volunteer or supply staff**

If there is a safeguarding concern or allegation that may meet the harm test then this should be addressed in line with Part 4 of KCSIE 2023. Information in relation to the harm test is provided through a link to 'Making barring referrals to the DBS'.

Members of teaching staff must comply with the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) Teachers' Standards:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

Members of staff must comply with the Heroes Centre LTD Code of Conduct and Staff Disciplinary Policy. Members of staff should recognise the 'Guidance for Safer Working practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education (2019)'.

Forming part of Heroes Centre LTD Whistleblowing Policy, if you have concerns about a member of staff, volunteer or supply staff, speak to the a Manager. If you have concerns about a Manager, speak to the LADO. You can also discuss any safeguarding procedural concerns with the DSL.

Heroes Centre LTD will inform Ofsted of any allegation and actions taken, particularly if the child is below compulsory school age or within the EYFS, within the necessary timescale.

#### **Allegations of abuse made against other pupils (peer-on-peer or child on child abuse)**

Examples of peer on peer/child on child abuse (but not limited to):

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (i.e. forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party)
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes
- Upskirting
- Initiation/hazing

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers/other children and that this can happen inside or outside of school and online. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". We have a zero-tolerance approach.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our behaviour policy, but this policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;
- Could put pupils in the school at risk;
- Is violent;
- Involves pupils being forced/coerced into drugs or alcohol;
- Involves criminal exploitation, such as threatening other children into criminal activity
- Involves sexual exploitation, abuse, violence or harassment

Staff are made aware of the importance of: making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up; not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and upskirting; dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. All staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and will be supported/kept safe so that they never feel like they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for reporting. The wishes of the victim will be an important consideration. Staff receive training on how to manage a disclosure as the initial response is so important given that children may find it difficult to make a direct report.

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. This is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 and victims can be of any gender or identification.

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.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- online sexual harassment:
  - consensual (NOTE: consensual image sharing may not be abusive but it is illegal) and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images – See also UKCIS advice on ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes’
  - sharing of unwanted explicit content (e.g. pornography)
  - Misogynistic messages
  - upskirting
  - Sexualised online bullying;
  - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threat.

#### **If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:**

You must tell the DSL and record the allegation, but do not investigate it; The DSL may contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the Police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence; The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including consideration for before/after school activities) – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed; the

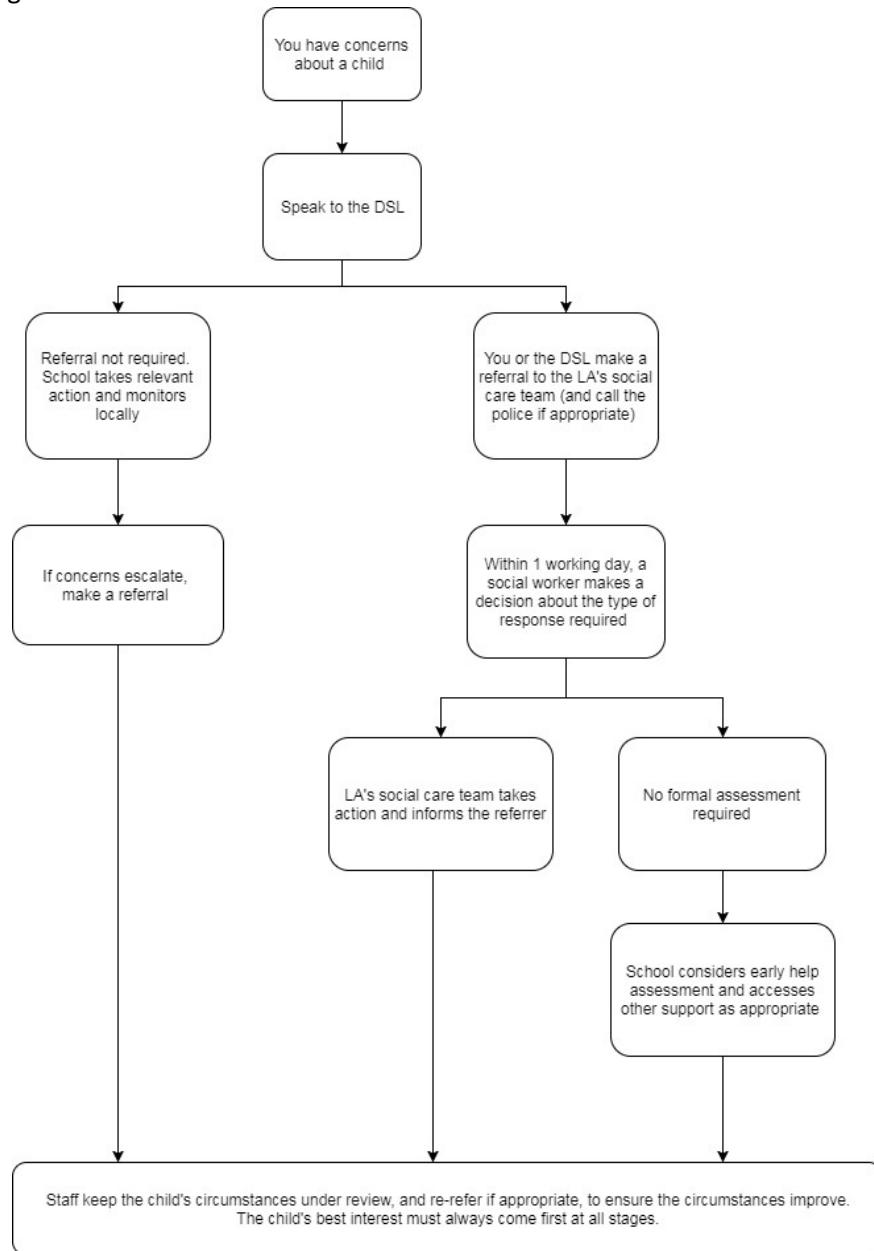
wellbeing of all children involved is essential and the DSL will contact specialist mental health services, if appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed in a timely manner and wherever possible, children provided with an outcome for the allegation. The four likely scenarios for managing reports are: manage internally (i.e. through behaviour policy), Early Help referral, Social Care referral, reporting to the Police. Deliberately false/malicious allegations will be considered in line with the behaviour policy.

In relation to sexual violence and harassment: Ultimately, any decisions are for Heroes Centre LTD to make on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead taking a leading role, using their professional judgement, and being supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer/child on child abuse by: challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour (as this can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future); being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys; ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent; ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially; ensuring staff are trained to recognise the signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to report their concerns; ensuring staff understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

## If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger)

Figure 1 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare and the child is not in immediate danger.



Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly (see 'Referral' below).

You can also contact the charity NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 if you need advice on the appropriate action.

## **Early help**

If early help is appropriate, the DSL will support you in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and Heroes Centre LTD will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

## **Referral**

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the Police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

If at any point Heroes Centre LTD feels that the rationale/justification for the decisions made by social care do not ensure that the child is prevented from risk of harm then they will escalate their concerns in line with the social care escalation policy/procedure. This must be recorded.

## **Allegations and/or low level concerns against staff**

Allegations and/or low level concerns against staff will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff. For use of reasonable force, the use of reasonable force is a measure employed to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals in specific situations where it becomes necessary to intervene. In safeguarding contexts, reasonable force may be applied to prevent harm, protect someone from injuring themselves or others, or to maintain order and security. It is crucial that any use of force is proportionate, justified, and guided by established policies and legal frameworks. Professionals involved in safeguarding must be trained to assess situations accurately, use force only when absolutely necessary, and prioritize de-escalation techniques whenever possible. Clear guidelines, ongoing training, and a commitment to the dignity and rights of individuals are essential elements in the responsible and ethical use of reasonable force within safeguarding practices.

## **Other complaints**

If concerns are raised by parents/carers that relate to a possible safeguarding issue, the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the senior leadership team and will be handled in line with this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. A written record of any complaints, and their outcome will be kept.

Heroes Centre LTD will investigate written complaints (relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements) and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Early years providers will make available to parents and/or carers details about how to contact Ofsted if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements. Parents and /or carers will be made aware if they are to be inspected by Ofsted. A copy of the report will be issued to parents and/or carers of children attending on a regular basis.

## **Training**

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction and must sign to confirm they have read all Heroes Centre LTD policies.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that their individual understanding of safeguarding is up to date at all times. Staff must be aware who they should approach with concerns or questions.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Staff will be made aware of the specific needs of vulnerable children. Notably, social-worker children (SWC), those with SEND, those with relevant health conditions and young carers. This will include the additional safeguarding risks.

## **The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The DSL and Deputy/Deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every two years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding policy documents and national updates). They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

## **All Pupils**

Heroes Centre LTD will ensure all pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of all safeguarding areas in an age appropriate manner. This will be mapped out by the academy at the start of each academic year and may take the form of assemblies, PSHE sessions, off-curriculum days, notice boards, displays,

posters or bespoke sessions from external providers. Where necessary, Heroes Centre LTD will be responsive to local context and circumstances. Pupils will learn how to identify and manage risks as well as how mitigate against those risks and how to raise a concern at any time.

## **Children Absent from Education**

Due to the private business nature of Heroes Centre LTD, we acknowledge that students may be absent or cease attending due to personal decisions made by parents or financial considerations. Despite this, Heroes Centre LTD recognizes its duty to remain aware of the reasons behind non-attendance. We believe it is imperative to uphold the safety and well-being of our students, and as such, we request that parents provide notice when deciding to withdraw their child from our services. Additionally, if possible, providing a justification for the decision would greatly assist us in ensuring that we do not overlook any potential signs of neglect or safeguarding concerns. This commitment to open communication helps us maintain a vigilant and caring environment for all students under our care.

A child absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. There are many circumstances where a child may become absent from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect;
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families;
- Come from the families of service personnel;
- Go missing or run away from home or care;
- Are supervised by the youth justice system; come from new migrant families.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the Police, if the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

Parents/carers will be supported to ensure that they provide at least two emergency contacts for their child and that Heroes Centre LTD is updated if these numbers change.

## **Recruitment**

At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at Heroes Centre LTD will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

All staff will read and sign to confirm their understanding Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. When the DSL is absent, the deputy/deputies will act as cover.

## **Confidentiality**

The academy has a separate policy with respect to confidentiality and data protection. This includes a list of guidelines for staff to follow to avoid breaching confidentiality. All staff must be aware that:

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding (including withholding personal information for the purposes of keeping a child safe); Whether problems are first emerging or a child is already known to Social Care.

The information must only be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis, but you do not need consent to share information if a child is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm;

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not be in the child's best interests

## **Notifying parents/carers**

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents/carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a concern or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents/carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL. If we believe that notifying the parents/carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved unless this would impact upon any potential investigation or place any children at risk of harm.

## Appointing New Staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity (best practice is checking their birth certificate)
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available (alongside a risk assessment and only under exceptional circumstances following authorisation) or where previous role was in regulated activity and was less than three months before appointment
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This could include criminal records checks for overseas applicants and a letter from the relevant professional regulating authority (seen as the certificate of professional competence) – A risk assessment will be implemented if these checks are not obtainable to demonstrate alternative methods sought and other relevant evidence.
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of
- State – NOTE: Job title is not the determining factor for a 'management' position
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

## Existing Staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)

- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

DBS checks will be undertaken every three years.

## **Record Keeping**

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or safeguarding concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation or safeguarding concern
- Details of how it was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above).

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the Heroes Centre LTD will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

## **Planning and supervision**

All activities or assignments involving children or vulnerable adults should be planned in advance to ensure they take into account the age range and ability of the participants and suitability of the resources being used. Teachers and volunteers teaching lessons involving children/vulnerable adults should be competent to do so. Staff should take account of the age, gender, nature of the lesson and any special needs of the individuals. Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be undertaken and documented. All teachers should avoid working alone with a child wherever possible. If it is not avoidable, they should plan their work so that at least one other adult is present at any time. If possible, the worker should also move to a classroom where he/she and the child can both be seen by other colleagues or another adult and/or the door should be left open.

This guidance applies also to transport in vehicles – staff must not offer to transport students anywhere unless accompanied by another person or as part of a formal arrangement. The relevant driver should have adequate training, relevant licence, and business insurance.

## **Physical contact**

On no account should any teachers, admin employees, or volunteers have any physical contact with a child unless it is to prevent accident or injury to themselves or anyone else (e.g. to prevent a fall), or in the case of medical assistance being needed (e.g. to administer first aid), or to provide nursing or other general care, in which case the prior consent of the affected person should be requested where possible. Where appropriate, consent from parents or those with parental or caring responsibility should be obtained. If a child is hurt or distressed, the worker should do his/her best to comfort or reassure the affected person without compromising his/her dignity or doing anything to discredit the person's own behaviour.

## **Photo Consent**

At Heroes Centre LTD, we value the privacy and safety of our participants and their families. This Photo Consent Policy outlines our approach to obtaining consent for capturing and using photographs or images of individuals associated with our organization. We are committed to ensuring that all photo-related activities are conducted with respect and sensitivity.

### **Consent Process:**

**Parent/Guardian Consent:** Prior to capturing any photographs or images of our participants, we obtain explicit written consent from their parents or legal guardians. The consent form will clearly state the purpose of image capture, which includes sharing on social media platforms and storing photos on work numbers (e.g., WhatsApp) and work emails.

**Consent Updates:** We understand that consent preferences may change over time. Therefore, we regularly review and update our consent records to ensure they remain current and valid.

### **Image Usage and Protection:**

**Respectful Editing:** If a participant does not have explicit consent for photo usage, we will take necessary measures to remove them from the photograph. This can be done either during the photo-taking process or digitally by covering their face after the photo has been taken.

**Error Resolution:** Despite our best efforts, errors may occur in managing photo consent data. In the event that a participant's photo is shared without appropriate consent or an error is brought to our attention, we will promptly remove the image from all social media platforms and data storage devices.

**Phone Usage by Staff:** Staff members may use their phones for capturing and storing photos solely for the purpose of our activities. Management reserves the right to inspect staff phones if there is reasonable suspicion of inappropriate photo usage, provided that consent has been obtained from the staff member.

**Escalation of Non-Consent Cases:** If consent is not provided for photo usage, the matter will be escalated to the appropriate governing bodies and will be handled in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.