

04. Recognising Child Abuse

- Abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil will usually be dealt with by the School's disciplinary framework in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying policy. Bullying behaviour is damaging and may lead to abuse; there is also the possibility that relationships between students are abusive, and that perpetrator and victim may be at risk. Pupils and staff should be alert to these possibilities and where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, they should refer to the DSL. Where a pupil is at risk of significant harm, the DSL will contact Children's Services. The Police will be contacted at the earliest opportunity if the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place. Staff should also bear in mind that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse.
- Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- Behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put child at risk.
- Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff must be alert to potential assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as mood, behaviour and injury, relate to the child's disability without further exploration. Children with SEN can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without showing any outward signs.
- It is the duty of all staff to be vigilant and observant when dealing with pupils in their care and to have no hesitation in passing on concerns they may have regarding the physical and emotional well-being of any child in the School. The following lists, whilst not exhaustive, may be indicators that a child is suffering abuse. Staff should be aware of other signs they deem to be of concern.
- Child abuse is when a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A person may abuse or neglect a child/young person by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. There are four categories of child abuse in the Children Act. These are: Physical Abuse, Neglect, Emotional Abuse and Sexual Abuse.
- Abuse is a form of maltreatment. A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger, or for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing ill health to a child.

Signs and symptoms of physical abuse could include:

- Unexplained injuries or burns, bruises, finger marks
- Fear of undressing or medical help
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact

- Self-destructive tendencies
- Fear of returning home or parents being contacts
- Unexplained absence from school
- Aggression towards others

Neglect

Neglect is a form of maltreatment. A person may neglect a child by failing to act to prevent harm. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child/young person's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, shelter
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Respond to a child's basic emotional needs

Signs and symptoms of neglect could include:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child/young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as the overprotection and limitation of exploring 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, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse could include:

- Physical and emotional development lags
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-depreciation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations

- Neurotic behaviour
- Self-mutilation
- Social isolation - few friends
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child/young person is aware of what is happening. These may involve physical contact, including penetrative (rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. It may include involving children or looking at it, or in the production of sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. It should be noted and remembered that abuse may be carried out by men or women, or by young people themselves. Also included in this category are Grooming, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Sexual Exploitation.

Grooming

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a young person. It is deliberate and purposeful. It may take place over weeks, months, or even years before any sexual abuse actually takes place. It may happen via the internet or social media, or in person. It usually begins with behaviours that may not even seem to be inappropriate.

Grooming young people may include strategies such as:

- Identifying with the adolescent.
- The abuser may appear to be the only one who understands him/her. Displaying common interests in sports, music, movies, video games, television shows, etc.
- Recognizing and filling the adolescent's need for affection and attention.
- Giving gifts or special privileges to the adolescent.
- Allowing or encouraging the adolescent to break rules (e.g., smoking, drinking, using drugs, viewing pornography).
- Communicating with the adolescent outside of the person's role (e.g., teacher, or coach). This could include, for example, texting or emailing the young person without the parents' knowledge

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. Consent cannot be given, even when a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation could include:

- Sudden changes in behaviour or performance
- Displays of affection in a sexual way, inappropriate to age

- Sexual awareness inappropriate to age
- Tendency to cling and need reassurance
- Tendency to cry easily
- Regression to younger behavioural traits
- Complaints of genital itching or persistent infections in anal or genital regions
- Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative or babysitter
- Bruises, scratches, bite marks on the body
- Unexplained gifts of money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Apparent secrecy
- Wetting day or night
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares
- Chronic illnesses, especially throat infections and venereal diseases
- Anorexia or bulimia
- Frequent masturbation
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Fear of undressing for games
- Phobias and panic attacks

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

This is a form of child abuse which has devastating physical and psychological consequences for girls and women. The World Health Organization describes it as: "procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons" (WHO, 2013). Since 1985 it has been a serious criminal offence under the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act to perform FGM or to assist a girl to perform FGM on herself. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 tightened this law to criminalise FGM being carried out on UK citizens overseas. Anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. There is now a mandatory reporting duty; all staff will be required, by law to report to the Police, and to the LSCB, if there is any evidence FGM has taken place or is about to happen. Norfolk Police can be reached by dialling 101, or in an emergency, 999.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen, but she might talk about:

- being taken 'home' to visit family
- a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- an older female relative visiting the UK.

She may ask a teacher or another adult for help if she suspects FGM is going to happen or she may run away from home or miss school.

A girl or woman who's had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

So called 'Honour Based' Violence

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 FGM and forced marriage. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled as such.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties. Concerns must be reported to the DSL to escalate.

Vulnerability to Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

Gresham's School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern, and we will seek to protect children and young people against the messages of violent extremism.

There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity. Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis – the student / pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations – the student / pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Special Educational Need – students / pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;

- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

Action:

- Screening & monitoring of School network by IT staff, in close association with Deputy Head Pastoral; awareness of the need for vigilance about pupils accessing websites which are connected with radicalised or terrorist activity.
- Vigilance by House staff and other staff for changes in pupil's behaviour (as above).
- Staff to report any concerns immediately to DSL and Deputy Head Pastoral. DSL to report immediately to Children's Social Care, MASHSupervisors@norfolk.pnn.police.uk; using the *Person Vulnerable to Radicalisation (VTR) Referral Form*. This will access the Chanel process the police, and Children's Social Care as appropriate.
- Engagement with parents/the family will be considered as they are in a key position to spot signs. Families will be helped and supported and guided to support mechanisms.
- DSL to also consider DfE helpline 02073407264 or counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
- Close communication with School Prefects in weekly meetings to raise any of their concerns or observations.
- *Guidelines on Teaching Political Issues at Gresham's* included in Teachers' Handbook Appendix 2.
- All staff trained by the DSL to be aware of indicators of vulnerability, the 'PREVENT' strategy, and how 'Chanel' process works.

Significant Harm

Some children are in need of protection because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. The Local Authority is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made where it has reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Decisions about significant harm are complex and should be informed by careful assessment of the child's circumstances, and discussion between the statutory agencies and the child and family.

Definition of harm and significant harm from Adoption & Children Act 2002, Section 10

- Ill treatment or the impairment of health or development (impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another)
- '**Development**' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development
- '**Health**' means physical or mental health
- '**Ill treatment**' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical

Recognition of Significant Harm

Any allegation of a sexual nature, or parents whose behaviour may present risk because of:

- Domestic violence, drug & alcohol abuse and mental health problems
- Any physical injury caused by assault or neglect which requires medical attention
- Repeated incidents of physical harm

- Any contact with a person assessed as presenting a risk to children, or children who live in low warmth, high criticism environments, and children who suffer from persistent neglect
- Children who may be involved in prostitution
- Other circumstances where professional judgement and/or evidence suggest a child's health, development or welfare may be significantly harmed

Stress and Distress

An abused child will usually show signs of stress and distress. Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Many of these may of course have nothing to do with abuse, but are worth consideration in trying to understand the child's behaviour:

- A fall-off in school performance
- Aggressive or hostile behaviour
- Difficulties in relationships with peers
- Excessively affectionate or sexual behaviour towards adults or other children
- Regression to more immature forms of behaviour
- Self-harming or suicidal behaviour
- No reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injuries, or a pattern of injuries
- Disturbed sleep