



## College Guardians Safeguarding policy including Child Protection

DSL Jane Eldridge

Deputy DSL Caroline Lloyd

24 Hour Emergency number 07513 106451

### 1. Introduction

Every child should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which, in this policy, means any kind of neglect, physical, emotional, sexual abuse or ill-treatment.

There is a wide range of adults to whom children can turn for help. These include College Guardians staff, school / college teaching staff, boarding house staff, a school or college Chaplain, the school medical staff, the schools or colleges Safeguarding Officer, school Counsellors and independent listeners at the school or college.

It is College Guardians policy to give contact details of the DSL (Jane Eldridge) to the Safeguarding Officer at each school or College where we offer our Guardianship service to their students. Our aim is to ensure that we work in partnership and take into consideration each establishment's safeguarding policy.

Every School or College should try to raise pupil's / student's awareness of Safeguarding issues through the Curriculum and Personal, Social and Health Education lessons as well as through the tutorial system and where applicable through the boarding houses.

Pastoral care and individual school or college policies should ensure that children have a range of contacts and strategies for their own protection and an understanding of the importance of protecting and supporting others.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004: and in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2021 part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children safe in Education (2021)

The policy applies to all staff associated and working with College Guardians. (Both hard copies and electronic will be given to and always available to parents and pupils and hosts)

The Safeguarding Policy is also available on the College Guardians website.

College Guardians fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and students
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children / students with the skills needed to keep them safe:

- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse;
- Supporting children / students who have been identified as in need of early help or who are considered to be at risk of harm
- Establishing a safe environment in which children / students can develop

## **2 Aims**

College Guardians aims, to promote the physical and mental health and the emotional well-being of the young people in its care; to protect them from harm and neglect and to keep them safe from maltreatment.

We aim to ensure that the school or college that the child attends, in line with their safeguarding policy, provides pupils with relevant information, skills and attitudes to help them resist abuse and prepare them for responsibilities of adult life including home and family;

Every school or college safeguarding policy should give access to information concerning external, as well as internal agencies, who are able to offer help on a wide range of personal issues. This should be permanently available to the children / students.

We aim to:

Establish and maintain an environment where children / students feel safe, secure, valued and respected and are encouraged to talk, believing they will be listened to and their points of view valued;

Ensure children / students know that there are adults in the college or school whom they can approach if they are worried

We seek to ensure that the child's / student's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect children from harm.

## **3.Procedures:**

As our head office is based in Malvern we will follow the West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures as required by Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (WSCP) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE). Depending on where any incidents take place we may also use the guidelines of that local area where relevant.

College Guardians will:

Ensure it has a senior member of staff nominated as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has received appropriate training and support for this role;

Ensure it has at least one member of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL (deputy DSL);

Ensure all staff including host families are alert to the potential need for early help and are aware of those children whose vulnerabilities may indicate a greater need and are aware of the role they may play in supporting other agencies professionals in an early help assessment;

Be alert and aware to the signs of abuse and neglect, including the specific issues of Peer on Peer abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Children Missing Education (CME), Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent) and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, and maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here';

Ensure all staff including host families understand their responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL/ deputy DSL and are aware that they may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care Services if they believe their concerns have not been listened to or acted upon;

Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on College Guardians staff for child protection;

Operate a vetting policy which ensures the suitability of adults working with children /students under the care of College Guardians

Ensure that the duty of care towards pupils in our care and CG staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;

Ensure that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and are aware of whistleblowing procedures and help lines; ( see CG whistle blowing policy)

Be aware of and follow procedures set out by the DfE where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff including making a referral to the local authority Designated Officer (LADO);

Ensure every member of staff including host families knows the name of the DSL and any deputies and understands their role;

Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance requires the need for an interim review.

We will invite relevant staff members to contribute to and shape this policy where appropriate.

### **Role of the Host Family**

The host family may have opportunities to observe children and changes in their behaviour. Children may confide in a host about any difficulties they may be having. Hosts may recognise the wide range of behaviour likely to be seen in children of a particular age. Appointments of Host Families are checked in the following way:

An initial application is sent to CG for screening to establish the suitability of the host

- An interview at the hosts home, this interview includes questions relating to safeguarding of children, and appropriate behaviour that is acceptable when hosting students / children.

- An inspection of the proposed accommodation
- Original ID documents are check by CG staff member
- An Enhanced DBS check for everyone over the age of 16 living at the host's home
- Two references including specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.
- References are checked for their authenticity.

#### **4 Reporting Procedure:**

A member of staff needs only reasonable cause for concern in order to act. One sentence from a child indicating abuse or non-accidental injury provides reasonable grounds and is sufficient need to act. This may also apply if clear information comes from another child or adult.

The member of staff must report the matter to the DSL (or, in her absence to the Deputy DSL) as soon as possible. The safeguarding reporting forms in Appendix 1 must then be completed, copies of these forms will be given to all staff and Host families.

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the DSL must be informed and a referral made (preferably by the DSL) to Children's social Care/ and or the police immediately or within 24 hours, The DSL will also inform and liaise with the school or college that the child attends.

#### **5 Training**

When staff join College Guardian's they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place. All staff will be given a copy of this policy and Part 1 KCSIE 2021

All staff will receive information and contact details of the DSL and deputy DSL.

An induction programme will include basic child protection information relating to the signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child and advice on safe working practice.

All staff will receive training in child protection and safe working practice which will be ongoing but at least once every three years, this is in line with the WSCP training strategy. Training will include signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as CSE, FGM, Prevent, on-line safety and peer on peer abuse, including sexting and sexual violence and sexual harassment. Training will also include how to record and report abuse. In addition, they will receive safeguarding and child protection refresher training and regular updates from the DSL as required but at least annually.

#### **The role of the DSL/Deputy DSL and Training:**

The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection training and training in inter-agency working, and will attend refresher training at two-yearly intervals in order to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through agreed common and shared assessment processes.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the College Guardians' child protection policy and procedures.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need and those with special educational needs;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- Encourage a culture of listening to children / students and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff.
- All College Guardians staff undertake Prevent Awareness training to support and protect students from the risk of radicalization. The DSL is the prevent lead for the organisation

## **6.Procedures for Managing and reporting Concerns:**

Every member of staff including Host families working with children / students at College Guardians is advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child or student ,staff members should always act in the interests of the child or student and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. They should not assume a colleague or another professional will talk action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

All staff and hosts are encouraged to report any concerns that they have as soon as they arise and not see these as insignificant. On occasions a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns to the DSL, in accordance with this policy, to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child / student at the earliest opportunity.

A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of a concern could lead to a failure to protect.

It is not the responsibility of College Guardians staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff/ hosts however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

The DSL should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concerns regarding any of the children / students that College Guardians look after. Any member of staff or host who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child / student is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the Deputy DSL. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

All concerns about a child or student should be reported without delay and reported using the documents agreed in appendix 1. These documents have been given to all staff and are part of the Host Family Manual and Host Family training.

Following receipt of any information raising a concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children's Services and inform the school or college that the child attends as appropriate. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

Any referrals made to external agencies will be made in line with local procedures as detailed on the WSCP website – (or the local authority where the incident takes place) If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child / student a referral should be made to Children's Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child / student's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member / Host family with concerns should press for re-consideration raising concerns again with the DSL and the head of safeguarding at the school or college that the child / student attends.

Staff / hosts should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police.

Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child / student have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the College Guardians Commercial Director. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point the should refer to the CG whistleblowing policy and contact Children's services directly with their concerns.

### **Types of Child Abuse / Safeguarding issues**

Child abuse refers to a child/young person who 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. If there is any suspicion of child abuse it should be raised immediately to a member of College Guardians staff

Specific Safeguarding Issues include but are not limited to:

#### **Peer on peer abuse (including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment)**

We recognise that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings.

College Guardians recognizes that abuse perpetrated by children can just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behavior. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

College Guardians also recognizes the gendered nature of peer on peer abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators), but that all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The different forms peer on peer abuse can take are:

- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting
- Bullying (including cyber bullying) gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to peer on peer abuse.

All staff are made aware of the College Guardians policy and processes in dealing with instances of any type of abuse as outlined in this policy.

Staff should be aware that such incidents and / or behavior can be assessed with factors outside the child's school or College and can occur between children outside the school / college day.

Staff, and particularly the DSL, should always consider the context in which such incidents and/or behaviors occur.

Where a child / student discloses safeguarding allegations of a sexual nature against another pupil in the same setting, the DSL should refer this to the DSL of the school or college that the student or child attends and if necessary seek advice from external agencies. All such incidents will be recorded using our child protection recording forms. (Appendix 1)

Reports of incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be responded to in line with Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and the DfE guidance 'sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' '

Support for the victims of abuse will be in line with support outlined in the schools / colleges relevant policies. For victims of sexual abuse, the school or college that the child attends should follow advice given by Children's Social care and consider using external agencies. If necessary College Guardians staff will contact these outside agencies for support.

Depending on the nature of abuse, the college/ school that the child attends may need to consider providing measures to protect and support the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other pupils and or staff by means of a risk assessment. The risk assessment should be recorded and kept under review.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

We recognize that CSE is a form of child abuse involving criminal behaviour against children and young people which can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and

emotional health. Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or group of children or young people. Victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff, are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation, the fact that the victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual and that it does not always involve physical contact but can occur through the use of technology. All concerns of CSE must be reported immediately to the DSL.

### **FGM and so-called "Honour Based" Violence**

We recognise that our staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so called "honour-based" violence (HBV) and we provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. If staff or hosts have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of FGM or HBV they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care.

All CG staff have undertaken the following Home office recommended course:

<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/resources/free-courses/recognising-and-preventing-fgm>  
<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/resources/free-courses/recognising-and-preventing-fgm>

### **Anti-Radicalisation - Prevent**

We recognise that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. We will ensure that:

Through training, staff, have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is why we need to be vigilant and how to respond when concerns arise.

All College Guardians staff have undertaken the government Prevent training:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>

Through visits and communication with children / students we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs .

Where a child / student is suspected to be at risk of radicalisation, the DSL will consider the level of risk, if necessary staff can contact the police directly on 101 if they have any concerns.



## **Domestic Abuse**

We recognise that 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. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships as well as in the context of their home life.

## **Child Criminal Exploitation - County Lines**

This is where children and young people are being exploited and drawn into drug related activity by criminal gangs, groups or individuals. Typically, the gang exploits young or vulnerable people to store and or supply drugs, move cash and to secure the use of homes belonging to vulnerable adults. There is a cross over between CSE and County Lines and young people are sometimes required to offer sex in order to pay off perceived debts. Concerns about young people being possibly involved should be passed to the DSL at the school or College that the child attends.

[https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines?gclid=CjwKCAjwgdX4BRB\\_EiwAg8O8HbeDQKw3OE4sRX7u3tpnm9OpFru2vQEvo8spU5QQuGFYCOER-2DORoC\\_DQQAyD\\_BwE](https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines?gclid=CjwKCAjwgdX4BRB_EiwAg8O8HbeDQKw3OE4sRX7u3tpnm9OpFru2vQEvo8spU5QQuGFYCOER-2DORoC_DQQAyD_BwE)

## **Modern Slavery**

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a new statutory duty on public authorities, including schools or colleges, to notify the national crime agency (NCA) (Section 52 of the act) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to modern slavery. The public authority bears this obligation where it has “reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking” Staff need to be aware of this duty and inform the DSL at the school or college that the child / student attends should they suspect or receive information that either parents or their children may be victims of modern slavery. The DSL will then contact the NCA.

## **Bullying**

We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying, sexting racist, homophobic and gender related bullying will be dealt with appropriately. We recognise that children with special needs and or disabilities are more susceptible to being bullied. We maintain a log of bullying incidents we are aware of and will report such incidents to the school or college that the child attends. We recognise that there will be occasions when bullying incidents fall within child protection procedures or may be deemed a criminal activity and that it may be necessary to report the concerns to external agencies. College Guardians Anti Bullying policy for more details with regards to anti- bullying, a copy of which is available on request

## **On-line and E safety**

All CG staff understand the unique risks associated with on-line safety, and the need to ensure that children / students are kept safe within these boundaries.

For further details please refer to the CG Policy on the Acceptable Use of ICT and E-Safety, this is available to staff, parents and students / children on request

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal. We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our pupils, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies.

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/?gclid=CjwKCAjwgdX4BRB EiwAg8O8HcfI2IcYasCl6BDS3pVijQxaMb4kx6OokpB98EmYwKoRSSegnvx4CRoCJrkQAvD BwE>

### **Photography and use of images (including handheld devices)**

The welfare and protection of our children is paramount, and consideration should always be given to whether the use of photography will place our children or students at risk. Images may be used to harm children for example as a preliminary to Grooming or by displaying them inappropriately on the internet, particularly social networking sites.

For this reason, consent is always sought when photographing children or students using any means and including iPads, smart phones or cameras

Many pupils own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

### **Supporting Children**

Regardless of the issues that children / students may face College Guardians will endeavour to support all children and students by:

Encouraging self-esteem and self – assertiveness, as well as promoting respectful relationships, and challenging bullying and humiliating behaviour;

Promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment, giving children and students a sense of being valued;

### **Information Sharing & Confidentiality**

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection and confidential sharing such information may be vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse.

All personal information will be processed fairly and lawfully in line with our duties under the Data Protection Legislation, including GDPR, and will be held safely and securely. However, we

recognise that this is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.

College Guardians staff with the DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All College Guardians staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All College Guardians staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of others.

### **Communication with Parents**

We recognize that good communication with parents is crucial in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children effectively.

We will always undertake appropriate discussions with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless to do so could place the child or an adult at further risk of harm or would impede a criminal investigation. If necessary the services of a translator will be used.

We will ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on College Guardians staff to safeguard children / students in their care and to co-operate with other agencies in this respect where necessary.

### **Record Keeping**

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible), writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with name printed alongside the signature.

All safeguarding and child protection records must be passed to the DSL. Any safeguarding case notes will be kept securely and only accessible to the DSL and senior management. These should include and correspondence with the Local Children's Services or other professional organisations e.g police or schools.

### **Safer Recruitment and selection of Staff**

All College Guardians recruitment will take place using the Malvern College recruitment and selection.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support College Guardians measures to safeguard children and to identify, deter or reject people who might pose a risk of harm to children / students or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. For further details see CG safer recruitment policy.

College Guardians maintains a single central record of recruitment checks – this is held by Malvern College Human resources department.

### **Allegations against staff**

College Guardians has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. College Guardians will take action in accordance with part 4 KCSE 2021 and College Guardians employment procedures. We acknowledge that a child / student may make an allegation against a College Guardians staff member or Host family member.

If such an allegation is made, which meets the criteria as identified in part 4 KCSiE 2021 the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the DSL unless the allegation concerns the DSL in which case the Commercial Director will be informed immediately.

The parents of the child[ren] involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it.

It may be necessary to inform the LADO. Where the LADO advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or that the police or children's social care need to be involved, the case manager will not inform the accused or the parents until these agencies have been consulted and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed.

[https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20559/refer\\_to\\_childrens\\_social\\_care/1659/are\\_you\\_worried\\_about\\_an\\_adult\\_who\\_works\\_with\\_children](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20559/refer_to_childrens_social_care/1659/are_you_worried_about_an_adult_who_works_with_children)

### **Whistleblowing**

*Please see CG whistleblowing policy for further information*

We recognise that children / students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Staff will be made aware that if they feel unable to raise a child protection failure internally, they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

### **Abuse of Position of Trust**

We recognise that as adults working for College Guardians, we are in a relationship of trust with pupils and students in our care and acknowledge that it could be considered a criminal offence to abuse that trust. We acknowledge that the principles of equality embedded in the legislation of the sexual offenders Act 2003 applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust. We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age

## **Summary**

**There are four categories of child abuse In the Children's Act**

These are: Physical Abuse; Neglect; Emotional Abuse and Sexual Abuse.

### **Physical Abuse**

Involves 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.

### **Neglect**

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, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Emotional Abuse**

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, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing them frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitations or corruption of children.

### **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 or buggery) or non-penetrative act. It may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **Indicators of Child Abuse**

### **Physical**

Unexplained injuries or burns, bruises, finger marks, fear of undressing or medical help. Improbable explanations for injuries, fear of returning home or parents being contacted, and unexplained absence from school.

### **Neglect**

Constant hunger, poor personal hygiene, inappropriate clothing, frequent lateness, and non-attendance. Poor social relationships, constant tiredness, independent, streetwise, no parental support for education and compulsive stealing or scrounging.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Fear of new situations, inappropriate emotional responses, self-harm, eating disorders can't accept praise, and low self-esteem. Lack of home support, depression, withdrawn, social isolation – don't join in, and few friends. *Emotional abuse may occur in its own right, but is always seen, to varying degrees, in all other forms of abuse*

### **Sexual Abuse**

Bruises, scratches, bite marks on the body, persistent infections in the anal or genital area. Any sexual awareness inappropriate to child's age – shown in drawings, play, vocabulary. Frequent masturbation, changes in behaviour, refusal to stay with certain people. Self-harm, eating disorders depression, low self-esteem and pregnancy

### **Recognition of Abuse**

Be open to possibilities; be aware – if you don't believe it is possible you will never see it, don't jump to conclusions and look for credible non-abusive explanations, but recognise you may need to seek advice to evaluate the facts.

### **The Symptoms of 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 (*including eating disorders*) or suicidal behaviour.
- No reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injuries, or a pattern of injuries.
- Disturbed sleep.
- Bullying is considered to be abusive.

### **Be alert to signs of abuse.**

Take immediate action in the child's best interest by reporting any evidence of abuse or non-accidental injury to College Guardians.

Record accurately in writing information that may be required in Safeguarding procedures. This note should record the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said. All evidence, for example scribbled notes, mobile phones with text messages, clothing, and computers must be safeguarded and preserved. Also make a note of what happened next.

### **Helping a child who wants to tell you about his/her abuse**

It should be remembered that the priority is to protect the child. The matter should be taken seriously. React calmly, listen carefully, observe but do not judge. Don't stop the child who is freely recalling significant events. Reassure the child that s/he has done the right thing in telling you. Indicate the action you will take and make it clear that you will have to tell College Guardians staff (no secrets). If the child comes back to talk at a later stage s/he should be told that you cannot comment or advise as that might affect his/her security, but you can listen.

Bear in mind these 'must not's':

- Do not yourself contact the parents
- Do not interrogate the child or ask leading questions
- Do not speak to anyone about whom allegations are made, including colleagues
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not ask a child outright if s/he or others have suffered abuse
- Avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator

If any child, student or CG member has any concerns they **MUST** report this.

DSL – Jane Eldridge

Deputy DSL – Caroline Lloyd

24 Hour Emergency Number – 07513 106451

For copies for document referred to in this policy please contact Jane Eldridge

[jane@collegeguardians.co.uk](mailto:jane@collegeguardians.co.uk)

CG Whistleblowing policy

Safer Recruitment

Anti-bullying and Prevent

Safeguarding reporting forms

Updated by: Jane Eldridge

Date: September 2020

Reviewed: February 2022 - JE Next review no later than September 2022– JE