ofg OUTCOMESFIRST GROUP

Belmont School

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1.0 Policy statement

Outcomes First Group is committed to ensuring that all of the people we support are effectively safeguarded in all services including fostering, schools and residential homes at all times. This policy applies to all children and young adults receiving education in our settings. It applies when working online and offline, in settings and in all virtual communications.

Safeguarding and child protection must always be the highest priority and at the forefront of everything we do. A whole school approach is required to ensure safeguarding and child protection are embedded in all decisions, planning, policy and day-to-day operations and activities.

It is essential that everybody working within the Outcomes First Group understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors must ensure that staff who work directly with children read and understand Part 1 of KCSIE 2021. Staff who do not work directly with children can read and understand either Part one or Annex A if is more effective to enable them to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All Outcomes First Group employees working directly or indirectly with children **must** ensure that:

- children and young people feel safe and that they are listened to;
- they create an environment and culture in which children and young people feel valued;
- the best interests of the child are always considered and acted upon;
- safer recruitment procedures are rigorously followed (please refer to the Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy for further details);
- they understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe through ongoing learning, development and supervision;
- they are vigilant in monitoring possible signs of abuse including for those children and young people who have complex learning difficulties or specific communication needs, who may be particularly vulnerable;
- they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**;
- they follow the appropriate procedures in place for sharing safeguarding concerns and that these are shared with relevant professionals in a timely manner;
- they understand and implement local safeguarding procedures as set out in local authority arrangements;
- children and young people have opportunity to learn about appropriate relationships with adults and recognise unacceptable behaviour by adults.
- they are aware that children can abuse other children (i.e. peer-on-peer abuse).
- there is a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, violence, abuse, inappropriate behaviour and bullying of any kind are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

2.0 What is safeguarding and child protection?

2.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and young people to protect them from harm. This policy includes the safeguarding of young adult learners within Outcomes First Group schools and other settings and applies both offline and online.

2.2 Safeguarding is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, Sept 2018, updated Dec 2020) as:

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

2.3 Outcomes First Group adopts a contextual safeguarding approach to safeguarding and child protection. Contextual safeguarding is: *'...an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.'* (Dr Carlene Firmin)

2.4 Child Protection

Child protection is an important aspect of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

2.5 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

While local authorities and placing authorities have statutory responsibilities regarding safeguarding, Outcomes First Group believes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The Group expects that staff keep the child or young person at the centre of all that they do and that any actions taken are in the best interests of the child. We also expect that children and young people are listened to and their voices are always heard. This is without exception and regardless of whether the child or young person is being cared for in a residential setting, foster home or being educated within school or remotely.

2.6 Defining Significant Harm/Child Abuse

'Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Whatever the form of abuse or neglect, practitioners should put the needs of children first when determining what action to take' (Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018, updated Dec 2020)

2.7 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. Under Section 47 of the Act, local authorities have a duty to make enquiries to decide whether

they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm.

2.8 Under s31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002:
'harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
'health' means physical or mental health; and
'ill-treatment' includes Sexual Abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.
Abuse or neglect is not always easy to identify; staff are more than likely to have some information but not the whole picture.

2.9 There are four defined categories of child abuse, which are deemed to be forms of 'Significant Harm':

- Neglect;
- Physical Abuse;
- Emotional Abuse;
- Sexual Abuse.

2.10 It is also important to be aware that:

- technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

- that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online.

2.11 All staff must be aware of the signs and indicators of child abuse.

3.0 Local Arrangements for the school

3.1 All staff must be aware of the local arrangements for safeguarding relevant to the school in which they work;

3.2 The local arrangements for Belmont school are as follows

3.3 Belmont School safeguarding arrangements are in line with local safeguarding partnership arrangements. The Belmont School safeguarding partnership consists of the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police force in the local authority area)

3.4 The Local Authority Designated Officer is Tim Booth / Shane Penn / Donna Green 01772 536694 LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk

3.5 All safeguarding referrals must be reported to the local authority Lancashire multi agency safeguarding team on 01772 531643. Referrals for children and young people under 18 will be dealt with under the Children's safeguarding arrangements, whereas those 18 and above will be dealt with under the Adult Safeguarding Arrangements. For children who are

resident within a region outside Lancashire, the referral will be made following the local safeguarding procedures for the child's local authority

38. **3.6** The local authority safeguarding referral procedure ;

Referrals where this is concern about the child being at risk of **Significant Harm** must be made in one of the following ways:

- In person or by telephone contact to the relevant **Children's Social Care Office**;
- In an emergency outside office hours, by contacting the Children's Social Care Out of Hours Service / Emergency Duty Team or the Police;
- All professionals must confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours of being made.

In the event that an agency does not agree with the response and decisions about the referral by the Children's Social Care, the referring agency should discuss their concerns directly with the line manager of the social worker, in the first instance to seek resolution. See also **Resolving Professional Disagreements (Escalation and Conflict Resolution) Procedure**;

- Referrals should be made to the duty officer at the Children's Social Care Team where the child is living or is found. All professionals should make a follow-up written referral within 48 hours using their agreed referral process;
- In Blackpool, the referral should be made in Blackpool using the **Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)**. In Blackburn with Darwen, the referral must be telephoned to the **Children Advice and Duty Service (CADS)**. In Lancashire, the referral must be made on the **Safeguarding Children Referral Form**;
- If the child is known to have an allocated social worker, referrals should be made directly to the allocated worker or, in their absence, the manager or Children's Social Care;
- If the concern arises out of office hours, the referral must be made to the Children's Social Care Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team. Any work undertaken by the Emergency Duty Team will be completed by the regular office hours' Children's Social Care;
- If it is not possible to contact Children's Social Care, the concern must be reported to the Police or if not available to the Duty Inspector at the nearest Police station. If the Police receive a referral prior to the Children's Social Care, they must consult with Children's Social Care as soon as practicable and prior to taking any action, if possible;
- Professionals in most agencies should have internal procedures, which identify **Designated Senior Persons or Named Professionals** - managers or staff, who are able to offer advice on child protection matters and decide upon the necessity for a referral. Consultation may also be required directly with the local Children's Social Care team or the allocated social worker in Children's Social Care;
- Arrangements within an agency may be that a designated person makes the referral. However, if the Designated Person or **Named Professional** is not available, the referral must still be made without delay.

A REFERRAL OR ANY URGENT MEDICAL TREATMENT MUST NOT BE DELAYED BY THE UNAVAILABILITY OF DESIGNATED OR NAMED PROFESSIONALS;
The person making the referral should provide the following information if available.

Note - absence of information must not delay a referral:

- Full name, any aliases, date of birth and gender of child/children;
- Full family address and any known previous addresses;

- Identity of those with parental responsibility;
- Names, date of birth and information about all household members, including any other children in the family, and significant people who live outside the child's household;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers;
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid;
- Any additional needs of the child/ren;
- Is the child registered at a school or regularly attending a school? If so, identify the school;
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in the child or family's life;
- Has the child recently spent time abroad or recently arrived in the area?
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location;
- The identity and current whereabouts of the suspected/alleged perpetrator;
- The child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Whether the child is currently safe or is in need of immediate protection because of any approaching deadlines (e.g. child about to be collected by alleged abuser);
- The child's account and the parents' response to the concerns if known;
- The referrer's relationship and knowledge of the child and parents/carers;
- Known current or previous involvement of other agencies/professionals;
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral.

How Referrals will be Received

- Children's Social Care will ensure that a duty worker is available to receive child protection referrals; outside normal working hours, in Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen the Emergency Duty Team will receive referrals. See **Local Contacts**;
- Children's Social Care will deal with the referral in accordance with the local Common Assessment Framework and the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and determine whether a referral should be responded to on the basis that the child is in need of support under **Section 17** of the Children Act 1989 or in need of protection under **Section 47** of the Children Act 1989;
- Referrers should have an opportunity to discuss their concerns with a qualified social worker;
- The worker receiving a referral will establish:
    - The nature of the concern;
    - How and why it has arisen;
    - What the child's and family's needs appear to be;
    - Whether the concern involves any risk of **Significant Harm**;
    - Whether there is any need for any urgent action to protect the child, any other child in the same household or any child in contact with an alleged perpetrator.
- Referrers should be asked specifically if they hold any information about difficulties being experienced by the family/household due to domestic abuse, mental illness, substance misuse, and/or learning difficulties;
- The worker receiving the referral will usually discuss the case with the referrer and in doing so, will:
    - Give their name and designation;
    - Help the referrer to give as much relevant information as possible and repeat back to the referrer the key points using the order indicated above (**Making a Referral**);
    - Clarify information that the referrer is reporting directly and information that has been obtained from a third party;
    - Discuss whether there are concerns about maltreatment and if so, what is their foundation;

  - Clarify who has and who has not been told about the referral;
  - Clarify the whereabouts of the child;
  - Discuss whether it may be necessary to consider taking urgent action to ensure the safety of the child or any other child in the same household or who is in contact with an alleged perpetrator;
  - Agree how to re-contact the referrer if further clarification is required;
  - Clarify the extent to which the referrer's anonymity can be maintained (if this is an issue in the case of a non-professional referrer);
  - Clarify expectations about how and when feedback is to be given.
- At the end of any discussion about a child, the referrer (whether a professional or a member of the public or family) and the Children's Social Care social worker should be clear about timescales and any proposed action and who will be taking it, or if no further action will be taken. The outcome should be recorded by the Children's Social Care and by the referrer (if a professional in another service) on the relevant forms including the Referral Form;
- Children's Social Care should decide on a course of action. They should acknowledge receipt of a referral and the decision made of the response to be taken within **1** working day. If the referrer has not received an acknowledgement within **3** working days they should make contact with the relevant manager in the Children's Social Care Team to ensure the referring agency records are updated with the outcome of the referral;
- The worker receiving the referral must consider whether there are other children in the same household, the household of an alleged perpetrator or elsewhere, who should be considered as the subject of a referral;
- The worker receiving the referral will also:
  - Check whether the child is subject to a **Child Protection Plan** and/or whether there has been any previous involvement with the Children's Social Care in relation to the child or children concerned and any other members of the household;
  - Identify other agencies or persons who may hold relevant information;
  - Consult other agencies as appropriate (including the Police if any offence has been or is suspected to have been committed - see **Where there is or may be a Crime Committed**).
- Parents should be informed of the referral.

- For all referrals regarding radicalisation, local protocols must be followed. Early identification of concerns should result in responses being made through Universal provision (Tier 1) or through targeted interventions (Tier 2).
- In a few cases, an individual may move beyond being vulnerable to extremism to involvement or potential involvement in supporting or following extremist behaviour. Where this is identified as a potential risk, further investigation by the Police will be required, prior to other assessments and interventions;
- Any member of staff who identifies such concerns, for example as a result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest the child supports terrorism and/or extremism, must report these concerns to the named or designated safeguarding professional in their organisation or agency, who will consider what further action is required and referrals must be made as outlined in 3.6. For children who are resident within a region outside Lancashire, the referral will be made following the local safeguarding procedures for the child's local authority

3.8 For all referrals regarding exploitation of children; If a practitioner identifies that a child is involved in, or at risk of involvement in CSE/CCE they should respond following their individual agency's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures, alongside any specific local guidance for identifying and responding to CSE/CCE as outlined in 3.6. For children who are resident within a region outside Lancashire, the referral will be made following the local safeguarding procedures for the child's local authority

3.9 The local authority procedure for an early help referral is; The Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW) identifies as early as possible when a child, young person or family needs support, helping them to access services to meet their needs, working with them to ensure the support offered is right for them, is offered in the right place, and at the right time. The main focus of the service is to provide an enhanced level of support to individual children, young people or families with higher levels of need. Service resources are prioritised towards identified priority target groups or individuals at risk who are assessed using Lancashire's Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as having more complex or intensive needs aligned to Lancashire's Revised Continuum of Need (CoN) at Level 2 and who would benefit from a targeted early help offer. For children who are resident within a region outside Lancashire, the referral will be made following the local early help procedures for the child's local authority

3.10 The Chair of Governors for Belmont School is: James Joyce

3.11 The Outcomes First Group Head of Safeguarding can be contacted at:
anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk

4.0 The role of Senior Managers and Governor

4.1 Governors must have oversight of safeguarding policies and procedures and ensure that they are being effectively implemented within the school and that training is effective. In line with KCSIE (2021), which states that; '*Governing bodies and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take **leadership** responsibility for their schools or college's safeguarding arrangements*'. The named Governor for the school is James Joyce

4.2 Like teaching staff and volunteers, senior managers and Governors must be safely recruited and have all relevant checks on file. Please see the Group's Safer Recruitment Policy for further information.

4.3 It is the Governors' responsibility to ensure that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated Dec 2020).

4.4 Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This has to be balanced with their duty to protect the victim and other children.

4.5 Where the School premises are used for non-school/college activities and the services or activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of the school staff, the schools arrangements for child protection and safeguarding apply. Where service or activities are provided by another body, the School must seek assurance that the body

concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place and ensure they will liaise with the school on these matters as appropriate.

5.0 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

5.1 *'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description.'* (KCSIE 2021)

5.2 The Head Teacher must appoint one individual to be the lead DSL and make arrangements for there to be deputy DSL in place who will manage any immediate safeguarding incidents in the DSL's absence. The DSL must be an appropriate senior member of the leadership team and, along with deputies, will receive DSL training every two years.

5.3 The Head Teacher must ensure that job descriptions for DSL and Deputy DSLs are kept on personnel files and clearly state their responsibilities.

5.4 The DSL (or deputy) must always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any concerns.

5.5 The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are to:

- provide support to staff regarding safeguarding concerns;
- lead on advising staff of any action to be taken due to a safeguarding concern;
- ensure that children and young people are immediately safeguarded from harm and abuse;
- ensure that there is appropriate cover during their absence, and that staff know who to approach if the DSL is unavailable;
- liaise with local authorities and other professionals, sharing information and fully assisting with any enquiries;
- adopt a child-focused and holistic approach ensuring the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take
- refer allegations to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent;
- refer safeguarding concerns to placing and host local authorities;
- refer suspected cases of radicalisation to Channel;
- refer suspected case of Female Genital Mutilation to the police;
- refer suspected cases of Child Sexual Exploitation and trafficking to the police;
- refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service after staff have been dismissed or there is suspected harm having been caused to children and young people;
- liaise with Outcomes First Group Quality Assurance Team and HR Team if any allegations or suspected harm having been caused to a child by an employee, supply staff or volunteer for Outcomes First group;
- ensure that the school complies with the work of the local safeguarding partnership.
- Ensure that all staff receive regular update training in relation to safeguarding;
- provide safeguarding updates to senior managers and school governors;
- ensure that there is effective monitoring and oversight of all safeguarding concerns;
- promoting the educational achievements of Looked After Children in line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

5.6 It is important that all staff understand the role of the DSL on their appointment within the school and as part of their induction. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding children and that a child focused approach is taken. The DSL will assess safeguarding concerns within the context of young people's environments. This is known as contextual safeguarding.

5.7 The DSL must ensure that clear, concise and good quality documents are kept of all allegations or safeguarding concerns. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

5.8 **Data protection and GDPR are not barriers to record keeping or information sharing when promoting children's welfare.** Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. The school should have clear arrangements in place for the processes and principles for sharing information within the setting and other Outcomes First Group Divisions and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required. Staff are required to be proactive in sharing information as soon as possible when it is in relation to a child's safety or wellbeing.

5.9 When young people move schools or move into further or higher education, the DSL is responsible for ensuring that the necessary information is shared with the new school or college. It is the DSL's responsibility to ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as quickly as possible and as securely as possible. Confirmation of receipt must be obtained. **Files must be transferred securely.** Schools must inform their Local Authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll.

5.10 Consideration must be given to sharing information verbally with the new school or college prior to the child or young person leaving. The DSL must ensure that confidentiality of any third parties is not breached and that they comply with GDPR. Records must contain factual information and must not be speculative. These documents must be kept confidential with the exception of sharing them with relevant professionals as part of safeguarding and protecting the child or young person. Records must be updated, and any actions must be followed up and completed. It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that a safe and satisfactory outcome has been reached and that all actions have been completed.

6.0 Safeguarding Training and Updates for all staff

6.1 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety, and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, that safeguarding training

for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning. They must regularly review the training programme to ensure that it includes all the required knowledge and that staff understand how it is to be implemented.

Whilst considering the above training requirements, governing bodies and proprietors should have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

6.2 This policy **must** be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). **All staff are expected to follow this policy and statutory guidance including KCSIE 2021.**

6.3 All staff must read the following documents:

- Part 1 (or Annex A where appropriate) of KCSIE 2021
- The school's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- The school's Anti-bullying policy
- Outcomes First Group's Peer-on-peer abuse policy
- Outcomes First Group's Exploitation policy
- Outcomes First Group's Protecting Children from Radicalisation policy
- Outcomes First Group's Harmful Sexual Behaviours policy
- Outcomes First Group's Safer Recruitment policy
- Outcomes First Group's Data Protection policy
- Outcomes First Group's Web Filtering policy
- Outcomes First Group's Staying Safe Online
- The school's Whistle blowing and complaints policy
- The school's staff behaviour policy (Code of Conduct)
- The school's description and guidance of the role of the DSL
- The school's description and guidance of the role of the Deputy DSL
- DfE guidance on sexual violence and harassment between children in schools and colleges
- DfE guidance on Children Missing in Education
- DfE guidance on Promoting the Education of Looked After Children
- DfE guidance on Teaching Online Safety in Schools
- DFE Guidance on Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings working with children and young people
- DFE Guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation

6.4 Safeguarding updates must be regularly provided to staff, either through face-to-face training, meetings or through regular written updates.

- Face to face safeguarding training must be provided (and recorded) to **all staff at least annually.**

- **DSL** must refresh their advanced training **at least every two years.**

6.5 All members of school leadership teams, including the Head Teacher and DSL should also be familiar with **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018** (updated Dec 2020).

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

7.1 Outcomes First Group recognises that it is not just one person's role to safeguard children, it requires a collective approach to safeguarding. All Outcomes First group employees must understand their roles and responsibilities regarding keeping children safe and reporting concerns.

7.2 During staff induction, staff will receive safeguarding training, including online safety. Staff must be familiar and understand the role of the DSL, the local safeguarding partnership and the individual systems relating to safeguarding within the school. Staff must also know, understand and implement the school's behaviour management policy, the child protection policy, the school's code of conduct, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, Part 1.

7.3 Staff are responsible for:

- compliance with Outcomes First Group policies, statutory guidance and legislation including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Updated Dec 2020);
- understanding the role of the DSL;
- helping to develop and deliver a curriculum which helps children and young people to understand about abuse, appropriate and safe relationships with adults and peers, and keeping safe both online and offline;
- helping to provide an environment where children and young people feel safe and valued;
- attending training and meetings;
- ensuring that they fully understand how to report concerns and if not, asking for further training and support;
- understand the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- listening to children and young people;
- supporting children and young people if they disclose safeguarding information;
- ensuring that they are alert to signs of abuse by peers or adults;
- ensuring that they are aware of indicators or possible signs of neglect;
- ensuring that they closely monitor any possible signs of abuse or harm for those children who are unable to communicate verbally or who have complex health and care needs;
- keeping sensitive information confidential and sharing it only with those professionals for whom it is relevant;
- helping to identify those children or young people who may benefit from Early Help;
- helping to implement Child Protection Plans.

7.4 Staff are in a close position to children and young people within schools as they know the children and young people. They have regular contact with them and so are in the best position to know if a child or young person is behaving in a way which could possibly indicate that they are being hurt or harmed. Any concerns, whether these are nagging doubts, worries, concerns or based on information told to them, must be reported immediately to the DSL both verbally and in writing. **It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that this information is acted upon. They have a duty to follow up with the DSL to ensure that action has been taken.**

8.0 Safer Recruitment

8.1 The Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy sets the processes which must be followed for the recruitment of staff and volunteers.

8.2 It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that the Single Central Record is compliant with legislation and statutory guidance and kept up to date and is stored confidentially.

9.0 Early Help

9.1 *'A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989' (KCSIE 2021)*

9.2 It is important that staff take swift and effective action to safeguard children and young people and to stop concerns from escalating. It may be that some children and young people will benefit from Early Help. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

9.3 Staff must be aware and alert to the possibility of Early Help being needed for those children and young people who have particular vulnerabilities, such as those who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

9.4 Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm

9.5 When a child or young person has been referred for Early Help, it is the responsibility of the DSL to set up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration must be given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

10.0 Reporting concerns

10.1 What to do if a child or young person discloses

Systems should be in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

If a child or young person discloses information to a member of staff, they must ensure that they:

- listen to the child or young person and reassure them they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- never give them the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. They must never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- do not dismiss what the child or young person tells them. All concerns must be acted upon rigorously;
- do not promise to keep it a secret. The member of staff must explain that they have a duty to share information to keep them safe and protect them;
- write down what the child or young person tells them. This must be accurate and in the child's words;
- immediately report the concerns to the DSL or deputy. If neither is available, the member of staff must report the information to the Head Teacher, Principal or Regional Director for Education and Care;

10.2 Staff must be alert to not just potential familial abuse and allegations, but also to children and young people making allegations against staff, volunteers or peers. In these situations the Group's Managing Allegation Procedures must be followed. (See Section 24 for further details)

10.3 All concerns, however small or trivial they may seem, **must** be immediately reported to the DSL. This must be done verbally and then followed up **on the same day** and documented on the electronic recording system. The member of staff has a responsibility to ensure that action has been taken with regards to the concerns on the **following day** and that the concern is documented on the electronic system. If action is not taken in a timely way as the member of staff sees fit, they have a duty to escalate their concerns to the Head Teacher or the Regional Director for Education and Care.

10.4 Staff must prioritise the child or young person's immediate safety. They must remain professional and adhere to all safeguarding and confidentiality procedures. After sharing the information with the DSL or deputy, they must not share it with anyone else.

10.5 On receipt of the information, the DSL must consider all information and then, in cases of serious concern, report this within **one working day** to the host authority, placing authority, Regional Director for Education and care and where relevant, the Local Authority Designated Officer.

11.0 Managing Referrals to DBS and professional bodies

11.1 This may include referrals to Disclosure and Barring Service, Social Work England, or other professional bodies including the Care Council for Wales (CCW), and/or the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) or Teacher Regulation Authority.

11.2 A Sub-Committee of the Outcomes First Group Safeguarding & Quality Committee takes an overview of all professional conduct issues to ensure the Group is compliant and consistent with all legal duties relating to referrals to professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

11.3 Outcomes First Group managers must notify the Safeguarding Sub-Committee of all referrals and potential referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service or any relevant professional body in the UK.

11.4 All professional conduct issues which may require a referral to a professional body, whether they relate to safeguarding children or not, must be referred to this sub-committee. For example, a teacher may be prohibited from teaching for a wide range of reasons which do not relate to the safety of children or young people.

11.5 The Safeguarding Sub-Committee will support the decision-making process to refer an employee to a professional body and/or DBS and make it clear who is responsible for the submission of any relevant documentation. This will normally be delegated to a senior manager within the division.

11.6 If an employee is dismissed from employment due to a safeguarding concern or allegation, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or relevant government body in Scotland or Northern Ireland must be made. **It is an offence not to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales**.

11.7 If a DBS referral is made, at the point of completion Outcomes First Group managers must notify the Group Head of Safeguarding and the Human Resources Operations Advisor of the referral and any other possible referrals to any relevant professional body in the United Kingdom, relating to the allegation made.

11.8 Where a teacher is dismissed or their services are no longer used because of serious misconduct or might have been dismissed or services ceased to be used had they not left first, they must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

12.0 Partnership working and sharing information

12.1 Partnership working and the sharing of information is key in keeping children safe. Everyone who has a role to play in caring for children has a duty to share good quality information with the relevant professionals in a timely manner.

12.2 General Data Protection Regulations

All schools must ensure that they comply with the Outcomes First Group's Data Protection policy which incorporates the GDPR requirements. The GDPR works around the principles of consent and assumes the automatic right of privacy to all individuals. This applies to children and young people's personal information, as well as that of staff and parents/carers.

The GDPR is not a barrier to sharing safeguarding information. Safeguarding concerns must always be passed on. It is not necessary to seek consent to share information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child provided that there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required.

All staff must complete the GDPR training. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the GDPR requirements.

12.3 Schools must ensure that they inform pupils, parents and carers of how their personal information will be stored and used.

12.4 Schools must ensure that they hold emergency contact details of the parents/carers of pupils. This is to be done with the agreement of the parents/carers. In line with KCSIE (2021) schools must hold more than one set of contact details for each pupil, where reasonably possible.

12.5 Data breaches must be reported immediately to the Data Protection manager as set out in the Data Protection Policy.

13.0 Peer on Peer Abuse

13.1 It is essential that all staff understand that abuse is abuse and the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. In addition to the information below, staff should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes First Group's **Peer-on- Peer abuse Policy.**

KCSIE (2021) states: **"Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it."**

13.2 Staff must ensure that they create a school environment where children and young people's safety is paramount and where unacceptable or unsafe behaviour is not tolerated. Staff must be aware and alert to incidents of online abuse between children, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images, sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils and bullying. This includes upskirting, which typically involves

taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Staff must be alert to possible signs of peer-on-peer abuse. Inappropriate language must be rigorously and consistently challenged.

13.3 All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here'** and be vigilant to any signs.

It is important that staff are aware that children may not find it easy to tell an adult about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

13.4 Staff must act immediately and report any concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse to the DSL.

13.5 Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, e.g. sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent,
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos
- upskirting
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group)

These forms of abuse can happen inside or outside of school both offline and online.

13.6 A contextual safeguarding approach must be taken when considering possible peer-on-peer abuse. Children and young people who display harmful behaviours must be seen as potential victims themselves, and the wider environmental risks must be taken into account. Staff must challenge any gender bias or derogatory language used by staff or pupils**.** Staff must not dismiss any concerns brought to them by pupils. Staff can report concerns verbally, but they must ensure that all concerns are recorded onto the schools Electronic recording system by the end of the school day.

13.7 When making decisions about how to deal with allegations, the age and understanding of the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour must be taken into consideration, as well as any relevant personal circumstances and how this relates to their behaviour. Schools must consider any disparity in age between the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour and the victim, the impact the behaviour has had on the victim, and any element of coercion or violence.

13.8 DSL must deal with any concerns of peer-on-peer abuse immediately and sensitively. As much information as possible must be gathered from the victim and the young person who has allegedly displayed harmful behaviour in order to gain the facts of what has happened.

13.9 The language used must be sensitive, non-judgemental and must not blame the victim. Victims must be supported and reassured that their safety and welfare within the school is the priority. Risk assessments must be implemented where necessary.

13.10 Where the DSL believes that there has been significant harm caused to the pupil, a referral must be made to the local authority immediately. In agreement with the local authority, parents/carers must be informed. Where possible, as best practice, parents/carers are to be informed face to face.

13.11 If the local authority does not believe it meets their threshold for further action and the DSL is not in agreement, this must be challenged with the local authority.

13.12 After the outcome/conclusion of the incident:

- a contextual safeguarding approach must be taken;
- schools must take all necessary action to learn from the incident and prevent future incidents from occurring, such as through targeted education around specific types of peer-on-peer abuse;
- support for the victim must be offered and provided where possible. Appropriate risk assessments must be implemented to provide reassurance and safety for the victim;
- schools must ensure that they **do not** adopt a victim blaming approach;
- the DSL must complete an investigation into the incident; The investigation must consider the incident itself as well as whether it is an isolated incident, and the personal circumstances of the young person who is alleged to have displayed harmful behaviour;
- if necessary, appropriate referrals must be made to support services for the young person who has displayed harmful behaviours;
- a risk assessment must be completed and implemented for the young person who has displayed harmful behaviours in order to safeguard them and other pupils.

14.0 Bullying

14.1 Severe or persistent forms of bullying can result in Significant Harm, which is why those providing services for children should have adequate policies, procedures and training to counter bullying. Bullying occurs when a person or group of people behave in ways which are designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people. Bullying can be overt and plain for all to see. It can be subtle and insidious. Bullying can become part of the culture, recognised or believed by all or a significant number of people as 'acceptable.

14.2 Outcomes First Group has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. All staff have a responsibility to challenge all bullying. Staff must help children and young people to understand what bullying is and how to report it. Bullying must be dealt with as a safeguarding matter. Staff must report any bullying concerns to the DSL **on the same day**. The concerns must be documented appropriately.

14.3 Schools have a responsibility to ensure that those children and young people who bully, are supported and helped to understand the impact of their actions.

The government has produced the following guidance on Preventing and tacking bullying, mental health and behaviour in school:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
See Rise Above for links to materials and lesson plans

The Equality Act 2010
The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and also covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Duty has three aims.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'. These are:
- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons.

14.4 For further information please refer to the school's anti-bullying policy, child protection policy, the Web Filtering policy, and the DfE guidance Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (Sept 2021)

14.5 All staff have a responsibility to report any suspicions or concerns that a child has or may be mistreated or harmed.

15.0 Preventative Strategies

15.1 The school will take all appropriate action to ensure that children and young people learn about appropriate relationships with adults, keeping safe, online safety as well as sex and healthy relationships. Relationship, Health and Sex Education (RSHE) lessons, Relationships Education, and Relationships and Sex Education will focus on important age-appropriate issues in line with Government guidance. Staff must ensure that children and

young people have opportunity to learn about safe relationships between peers as well as who they can talk to if they have any concerns.

A one-stop page providing teachers with support in teaching RSHE topics can be found here:https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health

15.2 Children should be supported by staff to understand what abuse is. Children must be listened to and enabled to report any abuse or neglect at the earliest opportunity. They should be given information about how to report abuse or any concerns about possible abuse. This should include being able to access in private, relevant websites or help lines such as Childline to seek advice and help.

15.3 The school recognises that some children and young people are more vulnerable by virtue of their complex health or behavioural needs, or disabilities. In these instances, all staff have a responsibility to be the 'eyes and ears' and report all concerns to the DS Lead.

15.4 For further information, refer to Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) 'Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment'.

16.0 Online Safety

16.1 There is a whole school approach to online safety to help equip pupils with knowledge and understanding to stay safe online. The school helps and supports its pupils to recognise and avoid online safety risks and to help build their digital resilience. This is integrated into everyday learning and covered in detail as part of the RSHE curriculum. There are a range of resources to provide support for online safety in schools at:
https://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals

16.2 The Outcomes First Group requires safe and secure systems to be put in place within schools that limits the exposure to such risks. Please see the Group Web Filtering Policy that is updated for schools each year and the Group's Staying Safe Online Policy.

KCSIE (2021) states that the school should have a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology. Schools are required to develop a local policy.

16.3 If a member of staff has reason to believe that a child or young person is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm, the reporting process set out in this policy in Section 10 must be followed immediately.

16.4 If staff become aware of an online incident that is a cause for concern, they should:

- Provide reassurance to the child or adult.
- Take immediate action to report any criminal offences to the police and social care.
- Inform the child or adult's placing authority and family as appropriate.
- Review the supervision and support arrangements for the child accessing the internet.
- Check the privacy and security settings on the child's devices and account.
- Agree what action will be taken to prevent recurrence and reduce risk, the risk assessment should be reviewed and updated. Further online safety learning requirements should be considered for the child.

16.5 Digital technology and its related risks are developing rapidly. An annual review of the school's approach to online safety will take place, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks children face. A free online safety self-review tool for schools can be found at https://360safe.org.uk/

16.6 The UKCIS external visitors' guidance highlights a range of resources which can support educational settings to further develop a whole school approach towards online safety: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-external-visitors-to-support-online-safety-education-guidance-for-educational-settings

17.0 Children Missing Education

17.1 All staff must be aware of the risks associated with children who go missing from education, and particularly that very often missing incidents are a warning sign of other safeguarding concerns such as exploitation, forced marriage, FGM, substance misuse or mental health problems. The risk of exploitation and abuse increases for those children and young people who go missing from home and school.

Early identification and intervention is a priority. Schools must have appropriate procedures in place for monitoring the attendance of children and young people in school. Attendance must be monitored through Senior Leadership Team Meetings and Governance.

17.2 The DSL must contact the main emergency contact as detailed on the pupil's file should there be concerns regarding the pupil missing education.

Staff must report all unauthorised absences to the DSL, who must make contact with the child or young person's parent/carer immediately to establish the child or young person's whereabouts. The DSL must inform the placing authority of a pupil's poor attendance.

17.3 The DSL is responsible for investigating any unexplained absences. Reasonable enquiries must be made to locate a child or young person who is missing from education. The DSL **must** refer any safeguarding concerns regarding the absence of a pupil to the local authority. Cases where there are concerns regarding forced marriage or FGM must be referred to the police immediately. All information **must** be documented appropriately.

17.4 Children and young people who are repeatedly missing from education are at particular risk of harm. Attempts must be made to talk to the child or young person about why they are missing from education. Records must be kept of those discussions. Any safeguarding information which the child or young person discloses must be shared **immediately** with the local authority. If the child or young person discloses immediate safeguarding concerns, the DSL must share this information with the police.

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

18.1 Exploitation of children and young people is a form of child abuse and can include sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation. This occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and /or for financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

18.2 CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that both boys and girls can be at risk of criminal exploitation. Both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

18.3 Schools must write and implement a local exploitation procedure which staff must be familiar with. All staff **must** read Outcomes First Group's Exploitation policy as well as refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021).

18.4 All staff **must** know the definitions, signs and indicators of CSE, CCE and County Lines. DSL must provide ongoing training and learning to staff around exploitation. All staff **must** have training in exploitation.

18.5 Staff **must** report any concerns regarding exploitation **immediately** to the DSL and document their concerns appropriately **on the same day**. Where there are immediate concerns relating to children and young people's safety due to exploitation, DSLs must make a same day referral to the local authority and report the concerns to the police as well as to the Regional Director for Education and Care.

18.6 Where there are low level concerns, i.e. where the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold of harm, the DSL must document the concerns on a chronology in order to establish a full picture of what is happening for the child or young person.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, but does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent. Examples may include but are not limited to: being over friendly with children; having favourites; engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

18.7 It is everyone's responsibility to help children and young people know about grooming and exploitation. Schools must ensure that children and young people know who to talk to if they have any concerns for themselves or other children.

19.0 Serious violence

19.1 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 a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

19.2 All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Further guidance for professionals can be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines

20. 0 Female Genital Mutilation

20.1 In line with KCSIE (2021), teachers have a legal duty to share concerns regarding FGM; 'If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police'. In suspected cases of FGM, staff must refer to the local authority as well as the police. The DSL will assist and support staff with this.

20.2 Staff must read and be familiar with statutory guidance regarding reporting FGM 'FGM Fact sheet': https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet

20.3 The DSL must ensure that immediate concerns regarding potential abuse, harm, honour-based abuse including FGM, forced marriage and breast ironing, CSE and Trafficking or Radicalisation are shared **immediately** with the relevant Regional Director for Education and Care and Chair of Governors) and that staff have documented them appropriately.

21.0 Preventing Radicalisation

21.1 Outcomes First Group fully recognises its responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children from radicalisation. Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory responsibility on schools to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the 'Prevent' duty.

21.2 All staff must be aware of the signs and indicators of radicalisation. Staff must be proactive in reporting any concerns, regardless of how small they may be, to the DSL who must assist staff to report all concerns regarding radicalisation to the Police as well as the Regional Director for Education and Care. Staff must document their concerns appropriately.

21.3 All staff must be aware of the local procedures relating to reporting radicalisation concerns.

22.0 Children Requiring Support with their Mental Health

22.1 Outcomes First Group recognises that schools have an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Mental ill-health can be an indicator of a child suffering or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All schools should have systems in place for identifying mental health problems and referring to appropriate agencies for

additional support. This will ordinarily be with the consent of the child and their family. All details of concerns and any referrals or other support arranged for the child should be documented on the schools electronic recording system.

22.2 Schools can refer to the Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance (2018) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2 The guidance provides advice on how to create a whole school culture in promoting positive mental health outcomes for children and young people.

23.0 Physical Interventions

23.1 While every school creates an atmosphere of nurturing, unconditional positive regard and warmth, Outcomes First Group recognises that on occasion it may be necessary to use physical intervention to keep a child or young person safe. Physical intervention must be a last resort and must always be proportionate. Once the child is safe and calm, it is essential that there is a debrief with the child. It should be an open discussion with the member of staff encouraging the child to talk about how they feel and understand what happened.

The intervention and the follow-up action must be recorded on the School's Electronic Recording System.

23.2 All staff must read and know the school's individual Physical Intervention Policy.

23.3 If a child or young person makes an allegation after a physical intervention, it is important that the member of staff writes down as much information as possible. Staff must complete body maps immediately after the event and make an appropriate electronic record. Staff must also verbally inform the DSL (or deputy) as well as recording it onto the schools electronic recording system. **Medical attention must always be sought for the young person.** Staff must inform their parents or carers. Allegations of harm relating to physical interventions must be reported to the Regional Director for Education and Care, the Group Head of Safeguarding (anne-marie.delaney@ofgl.co.uk) Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent.

24.0 Allegations against Staff

24.1 An allegation is any concern, complaint or disclosure that indicates a member of staff, agency staff or volunteer or has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or relate to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

24.2 All allegations must be treated seriously. Staff must maintain an open mind and suspend all judgement. Allegations must never be dismissed. When managing allegations, it is important that staff maintain a level of professional curiosity. Staff have a responsibility to

look after themselves and not to place themselves into situations which could present as unsafe. Staff must report any concerns to the Regional Director for Education and Care and the DSL.

24.3 When a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, the member of staff receiving the complaint must:

- write everything down and document it on the electronic recording system used by the school.
- immediately report the allegation to the DSL (or deputy).

The DSL must:

- take all allegations seriously regardless of whether a child or young person has made previous allegations and can speak to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent and seek advice about next steps on the same day.
- Must report allegations to the Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent within one working day.
- Ensure that they follow the Outcomes First Group's Managing Allegations Procedure.

24.4 Part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) outlines the importance of retaining oversight of any concerns or allegations about agency or supply staff, volunteers or any member of staff employed by a third party working in the school setting. Whilst the individual may not be employed by Outcomes First Group, **schools must ensure** that allegations are managed properly. KCSIE (2021) states *'In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the supply agency or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools of colleges, whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school or college, whilst they carry out their investigation.'*

24.5 If the allegation is regarding the Head Teacher/Principal then the Regional Director for Education and Care must be informed immediately. They will then seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent).

24.6 **All allegations made against staff must be reported to the Regional Director for Education and Care and HR and the Group Head of Safeguarding, and to safeguarding@ofgl.co.uk. Outcomes First Group recognises that managing allegations can be challenging and so will support with the process.**

24.7 It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that all allegations are managed in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

25.0 Working with the Local Authority Designated Officer (or equivalent)

25.1 In all referrals, the DSL is the lead professional within the school for ensuring that a timely response is received from the local authority. If a response is received which the DSL believes is inappropriate and does not prioritise the child or young person's safety, this must be escalated to the Head Teacher or Governors of the school to agree further action.

26.0 Whistleblowing

26.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Outcomes First Group recognises that on occasion staff may feel that they are unable to tell someone within their immediate place of work about any safeguarding concerns that they may have. The Group also recognises that children will be unable to voice their concerns if they are in an environment where staff also fail to voice their concerns.

26.2 All staff have a duty first and foremost to the children in their school. Any concerns, regardless of how small they may seem, must be reported. DSLs and Head Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that they create an environment where staff feel safe to openly voice any concerns and feel listened to. It is also important that staff feel supported if concerns are raised about them. If staff see or hear about other colleagues' practice which they are concerned about, which potentially may cause emotional or physical harm to a pupil, or if the standard of care being provided falls short of expectations, they must report this.

26.3 Outcomes First Group has an anonymous telephone support system (Safecall) where staff are able to share any concerns that they may have, safely and without fear of reprisal. All whistleblowing concerns will be taken seriously and treated as such.

26.4 Staff can call Safecall on **08009151571**, report online **www.safecall.co.uk/reports**, or email **outcomesfirstgroup@safecall.co.uk**

27.0 Covid-19 and disruption to schools

27.1 The Covid-19 Pandemic has caused significant disruption to education settings during the last two academic years. The safeguarding of children and young people always remains the highest priority in all circumstances. Whilst it is anticipated that the impact of Covid-19 will decrease, the school continues to have clear procedures in place for reducing the risk and spread of infection, managing cases/suspected cases, self-isolation and remote learning.

27.2 The School will:

- Keep up to date with the latest government legislation and guidance and ensure it is followed.
- Follow the system of controls to minimise the risk of infection.
- Have a contingency plan in place for outbreaks in the school or changes in restrictions
- have a remote learning plan in place for pupils to follow and engage in if and when required.
- Staff and children reporting to be symptomatic will be sent home and asked to arrange to have a PCR test as soon as possible and report the result to the school.
- Communicate any changes in processes to parents/carers.
- Regularly review its arrangements and, where necessary, update its risk assessment.

27.3 Each school will have individual arrangements and characteristics that may require site-specific arrangements. In such cases, the Regional Director of the setting should be informed.

All staff should continue to have full regard to KCSIE(2021) and all Outcomes First Group procedures, including the Safeguarding and Managing Allegations against Employees policies. This applies at all times, when working online or offline, remotely or at a setting.

27.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

In circumstances where remote learning takes place, staff and pupils must all know how to contact the DSL and who the deputies are if the DSL is unavailable. A contingency plan should be in place should the DSL become unavailable for work and the current deputising arrangements become depleted. This may be that an alternative senior leader has a buddying arrangement with a DSL from another setting for support should this be required.

Arrangements for reporting and accessing electronic and paper record keeping systems must be in place. If a member of the team is unable to attend work due to self-isolation, they may be able to continue to function as part of the DSL team remotely with this access. Sensitive or confidential case-related information must not be removed from the school to take to another location for remote working. Consider other mechanisms to access the information securely.

27.5. Practice Guidance

Many of the children and young people we educate have EHC plans and may remain in school. It is important that each individual child's circumstances are considered, and it should not be assumed that all children with EHC plans should be in school regardless of circumstance. Decisions should be based on the child's best interests. Arrangements need to be communicated clearly with parents and carers.

The following steps should be taken to agree a plan in respect of individual pupils:

- A risk assessment must be undertaken for each child. This should consider any health-related vulnerabilities of the child or members of their household (if known), any specific online risks and any child protection concerns.

- For every child with an allocated social worker, the most suitable course of action in the circumstance should be agreed with both the placing authority or local authority and/or their parent or carer. The rationale for the decision, the people involved in the decision-making, and the date and time of the discussion should be recorded clearly on the child's record.

- For any children subject to child protection plans, the local authority has a duty to remain in contact and see the child at least every 10 working days. Arrangements must be made to enable this to happen. As a key agency in the child's life, the school will commit to maintain contact with them. How this done is a matter for individual consideration.

- For children in need (As defined in section 17 of The Children Act 2004) we should recognise that these families require support, and the local authority has an obligation to provide that. You should ask the allocated social worker what the arrangements will be to support the child and family and what their expectations are of the school. The outcome of this discussion must be recorded.

- For any child or young person receiving early help services or subject to non-statutory multi agency plans. The manager or allocated worker for that child must be contacted by the school to establish how regularly the child will be seen and what the expectations are of the school to maintain contact with that child or provide support for the family.

- Each head/principal must inform the placing local authority if a child will be accessing off-site education. Ensure a record of the communication and any response received from the local authority is held at the school.

- As an absolute minimum requirement, during term-time, the school must make **weekly** contact with children and young people who are not attending school in person. This should be over the telephone or through virtual communications platforms.

- There will be arrangements to maintain contact with some children and young people during holidays. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- If the school is unable to make contact with any child or young person this must be considered as a potential safeguarding or child protection matter and make a referral through local safeguarding arrangements.

The following guidance is available:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/covid/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely
https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/guidance-teaching-pshe-remotely

27.6 Digital Learning

Where possible digital learning options for children and young people will be made available if they are having to learn remotely. All staff should be mindful that the Outcomes First Group's and school's safeguarding policies & procedures and Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy continue to apply, at all times when working online or offline at any location.

27.6.1 Acorn Digital Learning have produced a Live Online Risk Assessment, and Student Remote Learning policy and template, that have been shared with all Outcomes First Group schools and can be utilised as required.

27.6.2 Data protection and GDPR considerations must be taken into account. This includes rules on signing pupils up to online services, and staff accessing personal data when working at home. It is recommended that staff are regularly reminded of the data protection and GDPR policies and procedures, whether they are working from school or remotely.

27.6.3 The guidelines for digital leaning below must be followed:

- Ensure parents and carers are aware of online safety advice and resources such as Thinkuknow and Safer Internet Centre

- A link to ParentInfo should be on the school's website – this DfE backed website provides parents with up-to-date information about a range of topics.

- If staff are concerned about a comment made online by a pupil or the work they share, the staff member should take a screen shot and report it to the DSL via MyConcern / CPOMS (or the school's existing protocol as long as it is secure).

- Staff and pupils should be fully dressed and take into account the background/ surroundings. Staff should use a communal area, and anything in the background that could cause concern or identify family members/ personal information, should be removed or a sheet should be used.

- The teacher may need to give guidance to pupils to remove items from view. If a pupil is inappropriately dressed or in an unsuitable setting (e.g. a bedroom) they must be removed from the video call.

- Staff must not enter into one-to-one tuition voice or video call with an individual pupil or student without SLT agreement. If there is a need for single pupil interaction, please ensure that a colleague is added to the call, or that a parent is present with the pupil

- If a staff member urgently needs to call a parent or pupil from their personal phone, the number must be withheld by dialling 141 first and a record of the call must made (e.g. an email to the HSM, DH or DSL to explain the purpose of the call and any actions taken as a result of it)

- Home filters may block different content at a different level to the school's filtering software; if this appears to be the case for one pupil in the group the teacher should revert to or suggest an alternative resource.

- Take care that any material provided to students to watch is age and developmentally appropriate. For instance, do not ask Year 9 pupils to watch a film with a 15 rating.

- Staff should model good online behaviour in all ways, including the language used to interact with pupils and colleagues, which should be respectful at all times

- School leaders should make clear to staff the operating times for online learning (for example, only during the normal school day); no staff member should engage with or respond to any pupil outside these times.

- Clear guidelines for students connecting to a virtual classroom session will be given by the school and the teacher will check their understanding.

- The same principles apply to virtual meetings between staff and parents as face-to-face meetings

27.7 Home visits

Where staff need to make home visits, they should be mindful of their own wellbeing and safety if conducting visits to the homes of children and their families. Follow the school's lone working procedure and guidance. This should prescribe that you must at least inform another member of staff of your whereabouts and the time you plan to return to the school. Wherever possible, arrange for a colleague to accompany you. This is particularly important for visiting households with identified risks to the safety of professionals. You should discuss and assess those risks with the appropriate local authority.

28.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum to ensure it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve. Where necessary, updates will be made during the year.