

KAMUZU ACADEMY



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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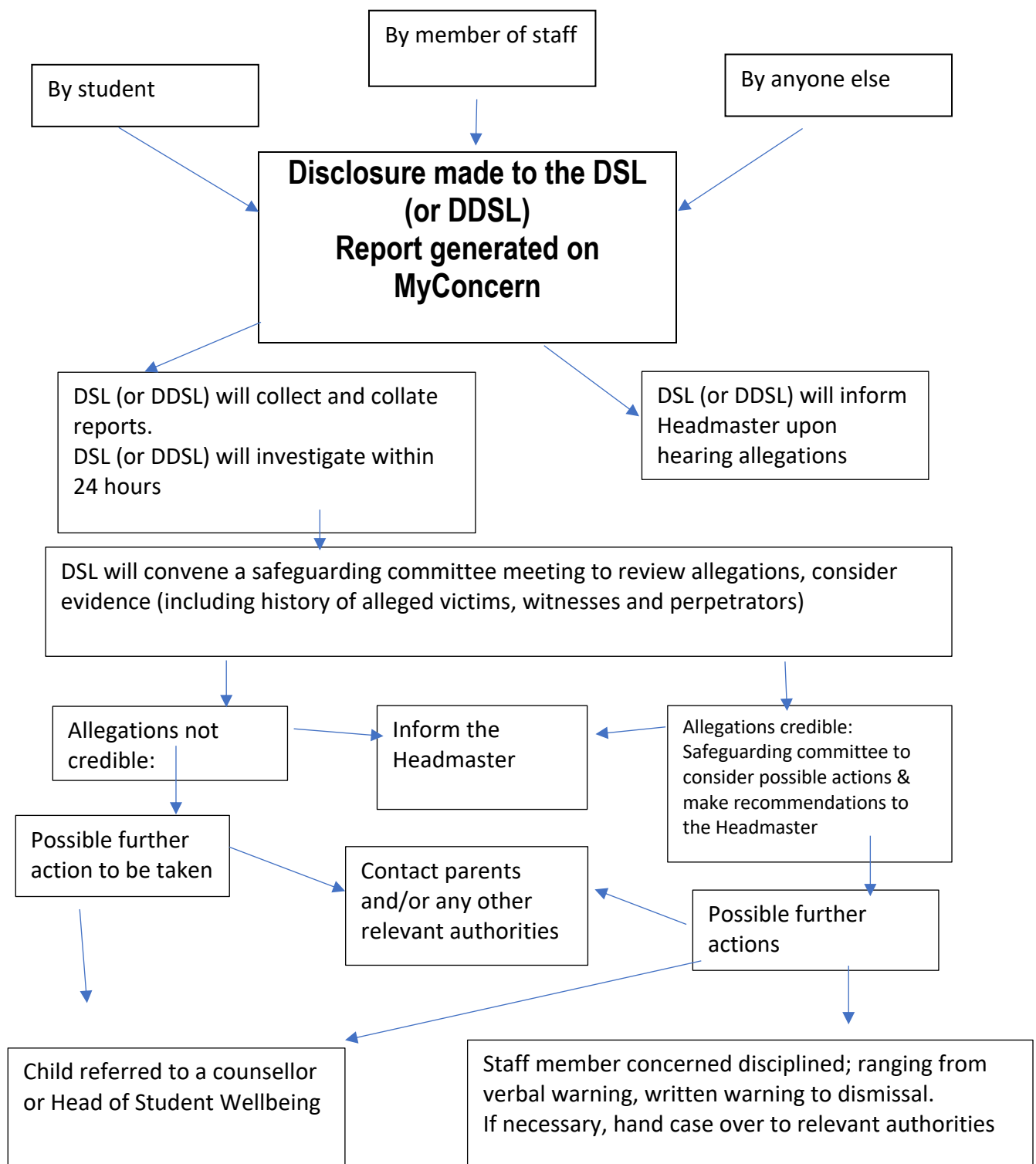
1.0 Raising concerns about a child

Cases of suspected child abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Ms Tinyade Masi immediately.

If the DSL is unavailable, reports should be handed to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) – Mr Humphrey Sibakwe / Ms Sphiwe Chinguluma as soon as possible.

- Each case must be dealt with promptly and an initial report must be generated within 24 hours
- The case must be recorded on MyConcern by the first member of staff to become aware of the concern
- The DSL (or DDSL) must report the allegations to the Headmaster immediately before commencing an investigation
- Each case has to be treated as highly confidential
- The DSL (or DDSL) is required to investigate the allegations and present to the safeguarding committee
- The safeguarding committee will investigate further, holding a disciplinary hearing if appropriate
- The safeguarding committee will then present their findings to the Headmaster
- The Headmaster will recommend to the Board of Governors the course of action to be taken (if the accused is one of the employees/teaching staff or students of Kamuzu Academy)
- The Headmaster will inform all relevant authorities (especially if the case falls outside the bounds of the Academy)
- The Deputy Head Pastoral will liaise with parents/guardians of all students involved
- If a disclosure is made about the Headmaster, the DSL will report directly to the Board of Governors through the board member with safeguard responsibility (Dr. Patrick Chirwa)

Protocol to follow when reporting safeguarding concerns



2.0 Overview

2.1

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

2.2

The purpose of this document is to assist all staff

- to safeguard and protect children who are at risk of abuse or neglect
- to promote the well-being of all children.

2.3

At Kamuzu Academy we are committed to safeguarding children and young people, and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies in our school operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. School must be a safe place for all children attending. Children not attending school during this time must also be safeguarded, including online, staff must identify, and the school must action any concerns brought to them.

2.4

This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- DfE Keeping children safe in education 2024
- DfE Teaching Online Safety 2019
- School online safety policy (including filtering and monitoring)
- Staff Code of Conduct – Safeguarding children
- Staff Acceptable Use Agreement

2.5

The safeguarding of children is everyone's business and schools have a responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promoting the welfare of children. This includes:

- Preventing the impairment of children's mental or physical health or development
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2024 states that:

'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school or college, and ensuring that safeguarding, and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.'

It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard

'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.'

2.6

This policy and the following procedures apply to all paid staff, supply staff, volunteers board members and governors working with or in Kamuzu Academy.

3.0 Legal framework

3.1

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together, 2023, highlighting that every assessment of a child, 'must be informed by the views of the child as well as the family'. (Working Together, 2023)

This is echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

3.2

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years; it also defines significant harm and the roles and responsibilities of Children's Social Care and the Police. This Act was updated in 2017.

The following three Acts exist to protect children in Malawian Law and should be referred to when necessary:

Childcare, Protection and Justice Act of 2010 revised in 2014, Dec 31 updated in 2017

The constitution of the Republic of Malawi (1994)
The Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015)

3.3

Legislation related to safeguarding in schools:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)

3.4

Education

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

4.0 Significant harm

4.1

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements. Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child and/or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the maltreatment. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g., a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning). More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case, it is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside the family's strengths and support.

4.2

This policy outlines the action to be taken if it is suspected that a child may be being abused, harmed or neglected.

There are four categories of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

4.3

It is acknowledged that a child can be abused, harmed or neglected in a family, institution or community setting or online by someone known to them or, less commonly, by a stranger; this includes someone in a position of trust such as a school staff member or professionals in other services around the child.

4.4

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

4.5

Safeguarding and the promotion of a child's welfare covers all aspects of the child's life, and the school is committed to ensuring that all its actions in respect of a child are compatible with this aim. If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether a system which mimics the Early Help approach should be considered. Early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

5.0 Context

5.1

The content of this policy is applicable to all paid staff, supply staff, volunteers, Board of Governors and Trustees.

5.2

All adults in school have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.

5.3

All adults in school believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

5.4

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and support staff for the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.

5.5

Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff, supply staff and volunteers:

- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To support pupils who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed Child Protection Plan.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of appropriate communication between all members of staff, parents and external agencies.
- By strictly following safer recruitment requirements, ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.
- To set out a structured procedure within the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- By sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff, supply staff and volunteers.
- To promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Social Care and Health. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- To ensure all staff are aware of the school's code of conduct.
- To ensure all staff have signed the AUP - acceptable use policy
- By providing effective management for staff, supply staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.

5.6 Equality

Some children's circumstances mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to easily access services. These children often require a high degree of awareness and co-operation between professionals in different agencies, both in recognising and identifying their needs and in acting to meet those needs.

6.0 In school safeguarding and child protection procedures

6.1

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with all expectations placed on education establishments designated by the Minister for Education in Malawi.

We will ensure that:

- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has responsibility for Child Protection and who undertakes regular training for this role.
- We have at least two Designated Safeguarding deputies who will act in the DSLs absence. (Throughout this policy DSL refers to the DSL or any team members. All team members are able to act equally. They work as a team.).

The Safeguarding and child protection team are:

- Ms Tinyade Masi –DSL
- Mr Humphrey Sibwakwe – Deputy DSL
- Ms Sphiwe Chinguluma – Deputy DSL
- Mr Tamali Banda - Member of the safeguarding team
- Dr. Patrick Chirwa – Board Member with responsibility for safeguarding / child protection

DSL is a member of SLT

- Those named above have received appropriate training. The DSL and their deputies will attend all whole staff in school training and undertake additional formal training at least every two years. The Safeguarding Team will keep themselves up to date throughout the year (for example meetings with other DSL, via e-bulletins, keeping up to date with safeguarding developments).
- All school staff will receive training at least every year, with ongoing updates through the year. Training will always include a reminder of in school referral processes.

Topics will include:

- Signs and symptoms of abuse
- Prevent
- FGM
- CSE
- Online Safety, noting that safeguarding and online safety must be taught across the curriculum

6.2

All staff will have access to and understand the process for logging a concern about a child. This is done via the online Safeguarding platform, MyConcern.

6.3

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 the children and gives local authorities 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 likely to suffer, significant harm. Due to limitations in accessibility of child protection and welfare officers within the local authority, action will be taken to engage the Malawi Police Child Protection Officer where appropriate

6.4

All members of staff will develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and of their responsibility for referring any concerns. All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

6.4.1 All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

6.4.2 Induction for all new members of staff, governors, supply staff and volunteers will include:

- safeguarding and child protection policy, which includes child on child abuse
- staff code of conduct and staff acceptable use policy
- behaviour and discipline policy along with the Anti-Bullying policy, which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyber bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying.

- procedures for managing children who are absent/missing from education, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods.

6.4.3 All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction equipping them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. The training is regularly updated.

6.4.4 All members of staff will read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 part 1 and annex B. Senior Leadership will support all staff in understanding this key document and implementing it in their practice.

6.4.5 All members of staff will know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, using the MyConcern software. It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries

6.4.6 Examples of good practice for members of staff to use as guidance:

- Recognise that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school staff. It is important that the person receiving the disclosure recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child.

- Recognise that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse.

- Stay calm, listen to the child and if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it.

- Do not promise confidentiality; you can however promise privacy, reassure the child they have done the right thing. Explain who you will have to tell and why.

- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- Keep in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

- If a child is making a disclosure the pace should be dictated by the child. Listen carefully to the child, reflect back, use the child's language, be non-judgmental, be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, do not ask leading questions and only prompt the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was.

- Accept what they are telling you; do not make judgements.

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you.

- Do not criticise the perpetrator; this may be someone they love.

- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.

- Pass this information on immediately to your DSL.

When responding to a disclosure, staff should follow the guidelines set out in the High Speed Training document displayed in the Staff Room. This document can be found in Appendix A.

6.5

All staff are expected to report concerns about safeguarding issues to the DSL and on MyConcern. In conjunction, staff are expected to report to the DHP for school records and contact with parents/carers.

It is recognised that not all disclosures will reach the threshold of 'Child Protection' therefore staff should be familiar with how to recognise and respond to Low Level Concerns. The High Speed Training document displayed in the Staff Room and found in Appendix B gives detailed information about the thresholds for concerns.

6.5.1.

Green – No Additional Needs

- Staff should report on MyConcern
- DSL will report to Hsm and tutors

Yellow – Early Help

- Staff should report on MyConcern
- DSL will report to DHP or DHA depending on the nature of the concern
- DSL will report to Senior Hsm
- DSL may contact parents if necessary

Orange - Child in Need

- Staff should report on MyConcern
- At this level it is deemed that the interventions are not meeting the needs of the child
- DSL will report to Headmaster
- DSL will contact parents
- DSL will create a child centered approach and liaise with authorities as appropriate

Red – Child Protection

- Staff should report on MyConcern
- DSL will report to Headmaster immediately
- All child protection procedures are followed
- Authorities will be contacted

6.6

All staff must report all information immediately, on the same working day, to the DSL.

6.6.1 The conduct of staff when in a 1:1 situation with a child should be managed in a way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their motives or intentions.

- 6.6.2** All staff must ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place children or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to children. All staff must be aware of the school's 'Whistleblowing Policy including Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns' and how to access it.
- 6.6.3** All parents/carers will be made aware of the possibilities of staff members' actions with regard to child protection procedures.
- 6.6.4** All parents/carers, as part of the child induction process, will be made aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which is on the school website

6.7 Human Rights Act 1998

Under the HRA, it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, 25
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

6.8 Equality Act 2010

The school has obligations under the Equality Act 2010. We must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). The School and the Governing body will carefully consider how we are supporting our pupils with regard to the protected characteristics. We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people, including those with long term conditions.

6.9

The safeguarding policy will be reviewed at least annually, and the document will be made available to staff, parents and carers, Board of Governors and Trustees.

7.0 Additional safeguarding responsibilities

7.1 Keeping in touch with children including children not in school

Contact details for parents and carers, and additional emergency contact numbers should be kept up to date. There is a recognition that there may be changes in details about family circumstances over this time. The school will do everything possible to update contact and welfare information for children and their families.

If children are at home, first day calling will be in place and children working at home should have reporting routes for raising concerns, including worries about being online. The school will have regular contact arrangements with families and children when they are learning at home.

7.2 Reporting concerns about children (face to face or via phone, video or similar)

All staff, in school or working from home must understand how to raise a concern. This should be immediate reporting to the DSL / Team using existing school processes including recording the concern on MyConcern.

Staff could (face to face or digitally):

- Talk to a DSL/Team member if they are in school
- If DSL/team are not in school go to the SLT member in school (DHP – Dr Hawkins Gondwe); additionally contact the DSL or team member by phone, video or similar

7.3 Mental Health

Appropriate support for children's mental health and well-being should be in place. It may be delivered in school, or from specialist staff or multi agency support services. Kamuzu Academy works in conjunction with counselling providers based at St. John of God Mzuzu.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

7.4 Learning online

When required, the school will continue to provide learning opportunities online. This will be a blend of activities to undertake at home, online activities and live virtual opportunities. There will be protocols for participation, for school staff and for the children at home. School staff should be aware that if they observe anything or concern, or if a disclosure is made in a virtual environment, the usual procedures apply, and the concern will be taken straight to the DSL.

8.0 Types of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online (an ever- evolving area of risk). Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

These definitions are from 'Working Together' (2023) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2024):

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children; children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially

around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

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

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

8.3 Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

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

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

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into

criminal or sexual activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to), sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation. 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. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

8.5.1 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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

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

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions

- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

8.5.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex;

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

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g., through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. Sexually coerced extortion (sextortion) is a serious form of blackmail that involves the exploitation of nude, explicit or sensitive images or videos to coerce victims into unwanted actions such as sharing further explicit imagery or paying to prevent further sharing.

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

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

8.5.3 County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines criminal activity in a number of locations including schools, colleges, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and

kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, (both from home and school).

Staff must inform the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

8.6 So-called ‘honour-based’

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse - which includes FGM, Forced Marriage and Breast Ironing: encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of honour-based abuse are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of honour-based abuse, or already having suffered honour-based abuse.

Staff must inform the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

8.7 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 4 and 10.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon professionals (including teachers) to immediately report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils.

If there are concerns that a girl is at risk take the concern immediately to the DSL

8.8 Breast ironing

Breast ironing: is where young pubescent girls’ breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. The custom uses large stones, a hammer or spatulas that have been heated over scorching coals to compress the breast tissue, or an elastic belt to press the breasts so as to prevent them from growing in girls as young as 9 years old. Much like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), breast-ironing has been identified by the UN as one of five under-reported crimes relating to female-to-female/gender-based violence. The practice is performed usually by mothers and female relatives, and it is believed that by carrying out this act:

- young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction

- it will prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name
- it will allow the girl to pursue education rather than be forced into early marriage
- it will delay pregnancy by “removing” signs of puberty
- girls may not appear sexually attractive to men

Most at risk: Young pubescent girls usually aged between 9 – 15 years old. It is a well-kept secret between the young girl and her female relatives who are likely to carry out the practice.

If there are concerns that a girl is at risk take the concern immediately to the DSL

8.9 Forced marriage

Forced marriage: ‘Girls not Brides’ is an NGO which is currently trying to make forced marriages a crime in Malawi by 2030. Forcing a person into a marriage under the age of 18 is a crime in Malawi. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

In the Marriage Act of Malawi it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

8.10 Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism: As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to ‘prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism’. This is the ‘Prevent Duty’ (updated in 2023). Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the DSL.

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

As with other safeguarding risks all staff should be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation taking their concerns to the DSL.

School staff should receive training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and the DSL is able to support staff with any concerns they may have. We use the PSE curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these

with others, especially using the internet. We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for modern life.

8.11 Sharing nudes and semi nudes (formerly sexting)

The guidance relates to the taking, sending or sharing indecent, sexually explicit images or videos of children (under the age of 18). This may be via social networking sites and instant messaging apps and services and may include digitally manipulated and AI-generated nudes and semi-nudes. Behaviours linked to consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes' images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk

This School is clear that nude images or videos of children are illegal. It may have extremely damaging and long-lasting consequences. The school understands that not all incidents are as a result of grooming by a perpetrator, and that some incidents are initiated by the child, as a demonstration of body confidence, body positivity, or maybe as part of an age-appropriate relationship. We have a responsibility to work with children, their parents and carers in ensuring that all pupils are fully aware of the risks, dangers and possible repercussions of sharing nude images and videos.

8.12 Upskirting

Upskirting: typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

8.13 Absent/Missing

Absent/Missing: A child going absent/missing from education, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow the school's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions. (Refer to Missing Children Policy for guidance.)

All staff should be aware that children who are absent, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage. Staff should be aware of the school unauthorised absence and children absent/missing from education procedures.

The school holds at least two contact numbers for every child. These will be used as part of the First Day Calling process.

8.14 Children and the court system

Children and the court system: All staff should be aware that any child involved in legal proceedings should be made known to the DSL. Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Where there is a family break up making child arrangements via the family courts

following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. KCSIE 2024 recommends the following guides to support young people: Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and young witness booklet for 12- to 17-year-olds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

8.15 Children with family members in prison

Children with family members in prison: These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Staff must inform the DSL if they know a child has a family member in prison.

8.16 Serious Violence

Serious Violence: All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in 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 well-being 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.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors 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.

8.17 Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn (KCSIE).

In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 legally defines Domestic Abuse (DA) as follows:

Behaviour of person A (Perpetrator) towards person B (Victim) could be domestic abuse if:

- they are both aged 16 or over.
- are personally connected to each other; and
- the behaviour is abusive.

All 3 elements need to be present.

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse.
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour.

- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour.
- (d) economic abuse.
- (e) psychological, emotional.
- (f) other abuse such as: Stalking and Harassment, Technology Facilitated Abuse, Abuse relating to faith / Spiritual Abuse, Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Perpetrator Tactics

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

Two people are 'personally connected' to each other if any of the following applies: -

- they are, or have been, married or been civil partners of each other.
- they have previously agreed to marry or have entered into a civil partnership agreement.
- they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- they have or there has previously been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- they are relatives

Any reference in the Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child (under 18) who:

- sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse, and
- is related to A (Perpetrator) or B (Victim).

Staff must inform the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

8.18 Homelessness

Homelessness: Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

In most cases school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it is also recognised that in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

Staff must inform the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

8.19 Online Safety

Online Safety: The detail of online harm and abuse is in the school's online safety policy (including filtering and monitoring).

The online world develops and changes at great speed. New opportunities, challenges and risks are appearing all the time. The DSL supported by the DSL team and specific staff who have expertise in Online Safety will stay up to date with the latest devices, platforms, apps, trends and related threats.

The Academy and the governing body keep children safe online when they are in the Academy and when they are learning online at home. This includes ensuring children know how to recognise risk and ask for help. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **Content** - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny/misandry, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **Contact** - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: child to child pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct** - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g., consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

DfE 'Teaching Online Safety in school' outlines how the curriculum will support children to learn about risk and responsibility.

Online safety concerns will be taken to the DSL in the same way as any other form of harm, or risk of harm.

The Academy will help pupils stay safe online by helping them to recognise, through the curriculum and through support offered to them, that:

- Some online content tries to make people believe something false is true and/or mislead (misinformation and disinformation)
- Companies use techniques to persuade people to buy something
- Some games and social media companies use techniques to try to keep users online longer (persuasive/sticky design)
- There are grooming risks online, such as grooming into criminal activities.

The school will help pupils recognise acceptable and unacceptable behaviours by:

- looking at why people behave differently online, for example how anonymity (you do not know me) and invisibility (you cannot see me) affect what people do,
- looking at how online emotions can be intensified resulting in mob mentality,
- teaching techniques (relevant on and offline) to defuse or calm arguments, for example a disagreement with friends, and disengage from unwanted contact or content online; and
- considering unacceptable online behaviours often passed off as so-called social norms or just banter. For example, negative language that can be used, and in some cases is often expected, as part of online gaming and the acceptance of misogynistic/misandrist, homophobic and racist language that should never be tolerated online or offline.

The school will help pupils identify and manage risk by:

- discussing the ways in which someone may put themselves at risk online,

- discussing risks posed by another person's online behaviour,
- discussing when risk taking can be positive and negative
- discussing "online reputation" and the positive and negative aspects of an online digital footprint. This could include longer-term considerations, i.e., how past online behaviours could impact on their future, when applying for a place at university or a job for example
- discussing the risks vs the benefits of sharing information online and how to make a judgement about when and how to share and who to share with; and
- asking questions such as what might happen if I post something online? Who will see it? Who might they send it to?

9.0 Child on child abuse

Children can abuse other children. This may include physically, sexually or emotionally hurting others. All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. This abuse may take place in school, out of school or online. The school has a 'zero tolerance' approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, it is never acceptable; staff have an important role in preventing it.

There is a clear recognition that even when there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse is likely to be taking place, and not reported. The school has a clear attitude of 'it could happen here', and when working in partnership with local schools this is revised to 'it does happen here'. The school recognises that failing to understand the scale of harassment and abuse, or downplaying some behaviours would lead to an unsafe environment, and a culture that could normalise abuse, meaning that children would accept it as normal, and not report.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. This includes challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

The school has system in place, well promoted, accessible and understood for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.

All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:

- bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice based bullying and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate relationships (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;(this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment such as 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, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- 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 and may also include an online element).

The school recognises the different forms of child-on-child abuse and is clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g., on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Stopping harm and ensuring immediate safety is the first priority of any education setting. School staff, alongside their DSL and team, will make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

9.1 Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider

- what abuse is and what it looks like
- how it can be managed
- what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual
- what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’. It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

- Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
- Children can abuse other children. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair

pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. (KCSIE 2024)

- Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
- Staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, significant harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

9.2 Types of abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

9.2.1 Physical abuse

This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another, and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or sanction to be undertaken.

9.2.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This must always be referred immediately to the DSL

The DSL will follow Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, in as much as it coincides with constitutional laws within Malawi. Therefore, consideration of the following is important:

- Managing internally
- Early Help
- MASH referral (report to Kasungu District Child Protection Officer)
- Reporting to the police.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia; pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts; upskirting.

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them and can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

9.2.2.1 Sexual violence

Sexual violence

Sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (Sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone’s bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if they agree by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- the age of consent is 18
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape

9.2.2.2 Sexual harassment

‘Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. It is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

It can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- sexual “jokes” or taunting
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes. Schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim.
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence)
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- sharing of unwanted explicit content
- sexualised online bullying
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they’re not comfortable with online.
- Sexual harassment creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

9.2.2.3 Harmful sexual behaviour

Children’s sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. We use the term “harmful sexual behaviour” (HSB). HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.

The ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than

two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma

9.2.2.4 Preventing abuse

Members of Kamuzu Academy staff know what processes are in place and what support can be accessed when sexual violence or sexual harassment has occurred, staff know that they can take any concerns to the DSL. The DSL knows what specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and is confident in accessing this support.

9.2.3 Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g., size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

9.2.4 Online Bullying

Online Bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, e-mail, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

Online bullying can take many forms:

- Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites

- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- Stealing someone's online identity
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chatrooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations

9.2.5 Sharing nude or indecent imagery

Sharing nude or indecent imagery (see 8.11, 8.12 and 10.8)

9.2.6 Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

9.2.7 Prejudiced Behaviour

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – for example disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

9.2.8 Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner. This abuse may be child sexual exploitation.

9.3 Expected staff action

Staff should consider the seriousness of the case and make a quick decision whether to inform the DSL immediately before taking any further in-school actions. All cases should be reported on MyConcern regardless of the seriousness of the case.

9.4 Recognising child on child abuse

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and consider:

- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability. Is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature, more confident or has well known social standing?
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery
- The effect on the victim
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

Not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying some behaviours related to abuse as it can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

Staff will talk to the children in a calm and consistent manner. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

9.4.1 Taking Action

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator

The DSL will:

- consider referral to Police or Social Care
- Record all incidents and all action taken

The DHP will

- contact parents if necessary
- share information with tutors, Hsm and Senior Hsm as required
- Convene a risk management meeting with Senior Hsm

- Record all incidents and all action taken

9.4.2 Recording sexualised behaviour

- Be clear, explicit and non-avoidant, and avoid vague statements or euphemisms
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form on MyConcern
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the child. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.
- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around

9.4.3 Gather the Facts

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. Ask the young people to tell you what happened. Use open questions, 'where, when, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not interrogate or ask leading questions.

9.4.4 Consider the Intent

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

9.4.5 Decide on your next course of action

Record the incident on MyConcern

If you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must report to the DSL immediately; they will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

9.4.6 Informing parents/carers

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

If this is not possible then a call should be made to parents/carers to inform them of the situation that has transpired.

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent/carer (they may be scared to tell parents/carers that they are being harmed in any way).

9.5 Considering confidentiality and anonymity

9.5.1 Confidentiality

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interest of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to

provide support and engage appropriate agencies to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

The victim may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. If the victim does not give consent to share information, the DSL may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis that applies.

The DSL will consider:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral will be made to children's social care
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes and where a report of a crime is made; this will be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

Ultimately, the DSL will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

If the DSL makes a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, this will be handled extremely carefully, the reasons will be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support will be sought and offered.

9.5.2 Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school will be aware of anonymity, witness support, and will offer appropriate support. The school will do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. The school will also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing pupils' identities.

9.6 Points to consider

9.6.1 What is the age of the children involved?

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

9.6.2 Where did the incident or incidents take place?

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

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

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

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

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

9.6.5 Repetition

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

9.7 Next Steps

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

The school will aim to follow Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, in so much as the framework and provision of care in Malawi allows.

9.7.1 For the young person who has been harmed

Victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

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

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

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

additional support. Any support offered to the child, or safety arrangements made for the child, should also be shared with them in writing (by email, or school communication system).

It is important the victim feels in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them.

9.7.2 For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary.

Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members. Any support offered to the child, or safety arrangements made for the child, should also be shared with them in writing (by email, or school communication system).

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that the young person receives a consequence for their behaviour (following the school behaviour policy). Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or children's social care are ongoing. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should take a leading role. The school should consider if, by taking any action, it would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution.

In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service).

If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it is important that the DSL works closely with the police (and other agencies as required) to ensure the actions of the school do not jeopardise the police investigation.

It may be that the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others, in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi- agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The school may also choose a sanction as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

9.7.3 After care

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

9.7.4 Review

The school will monitor and review potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school will decide on a course of action. Consideration will be given as to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur. Where appropriate, extra teaching time and/or staff training will be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

9.8 Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded in writing. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and addressed.

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care maybe appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school, should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it (following the school behaviour policy).

9.9 Preventative Strategies

Child on child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most robust policies and support processes. It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent child on child abuse.

This school has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. There is a strong and positive PSHE curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. The school makes sure that 'support and report' signposting is available to young people.

There is a strong pastoral network with tutors and Hsm working together to ensure that all pupils are kept safe in the school environment.

Staff will not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.

Young people are part of changing their circumstances and, through the school council and the prefect body for example, we encourage young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. We involve pupils in the positive ethos in school; one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive,

10.0 Possible signs and symptoms of abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. This is not an exclusive list and many of the signs and symptoms could fall into more than one category. Guidance on recognising signs and symptoms of abuse can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. Also, students with learning difficulties often exhibit some of these signs (e.g. reluctance to get undressed for PE, constant tiredness) which are not necessarily signs of abuse but symptoms of their condition; however, it must also be remembered that disabled children are 3 times more likely to experience abuse or neglect than non-disabled peers.

Children with special educational needs, diversity and inclusion challenges and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

10.1 Physical abuse

- Unexplained injuries, bites, bruises or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss the causes of injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Disclosure of punishment which appears excessive
- Withdrawal from physical contact/aggressive behaviour
- Arms & legs kept covered in hot weather (excluding for reasons of cultural dress)
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendency
- Running away

10.2 Emotional abuse

- Physical, mental, emotional or developmental lag
- Domestic violence
- Disclosure of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to making mistakes or fear of punishment
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviours

- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging

10.3 Sexual abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Displays of affection which are inappropriate
- Alleged promiscuity or sexualised behaviour
- Fear of undressing
- Regression to younger behaviour
- Inappropriate internet use and possible 'grooming' concerns
- Genital itching or other genital/anal pain/injury
- Distrust of familiar adult
- Unexplained gifts of money, mobile phones etc.
- Depression and withdrawal
- Apparent secrecy about social activities or the identity of "special friends"
- Wetting or soiling, day and night
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares
- Chronic illness, especially throat infections and sexually transmitted disease

10.4 Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems or unmet special needs
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- Poor social relationships
- Deterioration in school performance
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

10.5 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly absent from school or education or not taking part in education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infection
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Staff should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise themselves as such.

10.6 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The World Health Organisation identify girls between 4 and 10 as being the most at risk. FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

10.7 Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism:

10.7.1 Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

10.7.2 Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

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

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online, so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes

- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

10.8 Handling a nude or semi-nude image or video incident:

It is important that school actions do not blame, shame or criminalise the child. There should always be an initial review meeting, led by the DSL. This should consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people

When assessing the risks, the following should be considered:

- Why was the imagery shared?
 - Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?
 - Who has shared the imagery?
 - Where has the imagery been shared?
 - Are there any adults involved in the sharing of imagery?
 - Does the child involved have additional vulnerabilities?
 - Does the young person understand consent?
 - Has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?
- If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care.
Do not refer automatically, unless there are additional concerns about the pressure applied on the child to take/share the image, or unless there are sexual aspects involved which are not in line with the child's age/stage.
 - Imagery should not be viewed, DSL only - only view if it is essential to keep the child safe.
 - What further information is required to decide on the best response
 - Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. (This may be unknown.)
 - Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services.
 - Any relevant facts about the young person involved which would influence risk
 - If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
 - Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved - in most cases parents/carers should be involved

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care should be made if at this initial stage:

1. The incident involves an adult
2. There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
3. What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
4. The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
5. You have reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply, then the school may decide not to involve police or children's social care (the school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light).

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the school's pastoral support and disciplinary framework and if appropriate local network of support.

Image taking and sharing includes **Upskirting**: where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

11.0 What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

11.1 You must report the concerns immediately, on the same working day, to the DSL or their deputies. You may report verbally, but this must be followed up by a written account, recorded on MyConcern, on the same working day.

12.0 The role and responsibilities of the DSL and team members

12.1 Obtain information from staff, supply staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information on MyConcern.

12.2 DSL and team members will be supported by pastoral staff, clinic staff, counsellor etc.

12.3 Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate.

12.4 They should report any serious concerns to the Headmaster immediately

12.5 If it is agreed during the consultation or if there is an immediate risk to the child, the student should be immediately contacted by the DHP

12.6 All students involved will be offered support

12.7 Those who requiring additional support will be referred to the external counsellors

12.8 Concerns will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above

12.9 Responsibilities

The DSL and team are responsible for:

12.9.1 Keeping full written chronological records of in-school concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

12.9.2 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.

12.9.3 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.

12.9.4 Taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school.

12.9.5 Ensuring that where any child currently who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred securely to the new school immediately (within 5 days of the child starting the new school) and that the child's social worker (if applicable) is informed. A digital copy of the child's information will be securely retained / archived by Kamuzu Academy.

12.9.6 The Governing body should ensure the DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out the duties of the post. The role carries a significant level of responsibility and the postholder should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively.

13.0 Supporting children

13.1 All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or feel threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

13.2 We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence and/or abuse may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self-blame.

13.3 We recognise that the school may provide the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

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

13.5 Kamuzu Academy will support all children through:

- The curriculum
- The school ethos
- Providing a safe space in the Well-being Room where students can turn if they need support or advice.
- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school, giving children a sense of being valued.
- Ensuring children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the child's new school.

14.0 Supporting staff

We recognise that staff working at Kamuzu Academy who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to discuss the situation with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

15.0 Safer Recruitment and allegations, including whistleblowing and low-level concerns

At Kamuzu Academy we will ensure we practise Safe Recruitment by undertaking thorough background checks of staff and volunteers who work with children.

Recruitment adverts will highlight the priority that the school places on this and the school's commitment to safeguarding. References and medical checks will be made on all new staff, and all staff will have references on file.

The school will follow the guidance set out in
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

15.1 Allegations against staff

15.1.1 At Kamuzu Academy we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of adults in the school should be taken to the Headteacher without delay, any concerns about the Headteacher should go to the Chairman of the Board.

15.1.2 We understand that a child or 3rd party may make an allegation against a member of staff.

15.1.3 We understand that an allegation is wider than just those where it is considered that there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm. Some allegations may indicate that a staff member is unsuitable to work with children.

15.1.4 We will be guided by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023¹ which defines an allegation as when an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children

¹ Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023" is the latest statutory guidance from the Department for Education in England, issued in December 2023. It replaces the 2018 edition and subsequent updates, providing an updated framework for organizations, agencies, and practitioners involved in child welfare and protection.

15.1.5 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation, or having the concern, will immediately inform the Headteacher; this must be done on the same working day.

15.1.6 The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss immediately, on the same working day, the content of the allegation with the Chairman of the Board, before taking any further action.

15.1.7 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the member of staff will immediately inform the Chairman of Board; this must be done on the same working day.

15.2 Whistleblowing

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

Further information is available in our Whistleblowing Policy, including Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns.

16.0 Safeguarding and the school culture

16.1 Reasonable force

The school will, where appropriate, create individual plans to minimise the likelihood of challenging behaviour, and when it occurs there will be less use of physical restraint and other restrictive methods

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. Staff need to be aware that if a child sustains an injury as a result of physical intervention Safeguarding and Child Protection processes must be followed.

16.2 Bullying

Our policy on bullying, and online bullying, is set out in a separate policy (Anti-Bullying Policy) and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

16.3 Incidents motivated by perceived differences

Bullying and abuse can be motivated by perceived differences e.g., on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other difference. We acknowledge that repeated incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

16.4 Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from school when undertaking school trips and visits.

16.5 Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

16.6 Other relevant school policies and guidance

- Whistleblowing Policy, including Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy (including filtering and monitoring)

16.7 Support and training

We are committed to the provision of safeguarding training for all school staff, supply staff, paid and voluntary, including agency staff, and we recognise that staff must be regularly updated. Safeguarding and Child Protection is always part of our start of year professional development and induction every September.

In addition to the annual basic safeguarding training, the DSL and Team undertake training in inter-agency working at least bi-annually to keep their knowledge and skill up to date throughout the year.

All other staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up to date by annual refresher training – this training cycles round a range of key topics. This will be additionally supported every year with training and updates provided by the DSL through staff meetings, training days, written updates and briefings.

17.0 Managing Child Protection Cases

17.1 Children potentially at greater risk of harm (Child in Need and Child Protection)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (e.g., responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known

safeguarding risks) and promoting welfare (e.g. considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

18.0 Record keeping

18.1 DfE guidance says that the DSL will keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals and concerns. These should be kept separately from academic records, in a confidential file stored in a secure cabinet, accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Current cases are exempt from examination by parents or children unless subject to a court order. Subject Access Requests may be made for records of historic, closed issues.

18.2 High quality record keeping in respect of all concerns about children's welfare is expected. The records should be completed in a timely manner and include all relevant information such as dates, times, others involved, witnesses etc. All records should be signed and dated. The child's confidential record should include a front sheet chronology of concerns to support the understanding of the impact of past concerns, patterns and escalation of concerns.

18.3 If a child transfers to another school or other educational establishment, the DSL must forward securely, within 5 days of the child starting the new school, the child protection file to a named person at the receiving school/establishment under a separate cover from the academic records. The file should be marked 'confidential, to be opened by addressee only.'

18.4 The DSL should retain a digital copy of the child protection file, which should be stored in a secure area accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Child Protection records about a student who has ceased to become of compulsory school age should be archived and catalogued. Records must be kept until a child reaches 25 years of age; child protection records must be kept for 35 years after the child leaves the school.

18.5 When making a referral, the referrer should keep a written record of:

- Discussions with child
- Discussions with parent/s
- Discussions with staff
- Information provided to the MASH
- Advice given and decisions taken (clearly times, dated and signed)

18.6 The referrer should confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours, using MyConcern software.

18.7 Kamuzu Acadmey will keep up-to-date personal data records of all the children (through the DHA office) by regularly reminding parents to inform us of any change in family circumstances and requesting an annual update.

19.0 Confidentiality and information sharing

19.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

19.2 The Headteacher or DSL will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.

19.3 However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

19.4 When considering sharing information the staff will:

19.4.1 Remember that GDPR is not a barrier to sharing information, it provides the framework

19.4.2 Be open & honest with the person from the outset about how information may be shared

19.4.3 Seek advice, do not fail to share information because you are unsure what to do

19.4.4 Share with consent where appropriate & respect the wishes of those who refuse consent unless you believe that there is a risk of harm to child if the information is not shared

19.4.5 Consider safety and well-being of the child and base information sharing decisions on this

19.4.6 Ensure all information shared is Necessary, Proportionate, Relevant, Accurate, Timely & Secure. Ensure any third party or hearsay information is identified and that you have consent to share it

19.4.7 Keep a record of your decision and reasons for it. Record what you have shared, with whom and the purpose, on MyConcern.

20.0 Key contacts

Outside Malawi

20.1 NSPCC whistleblowing helpline

+44 0800 028 0285 and help@nspcc.org.uk

Whistleblowing advice: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

General helpline: www.nspcc.org.uk/Helpline

20.2 UK Safer Internet Centre

POSH Professionals Online Safety Helpline for schools

+44 0344 381 4772

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline>

Within Malawi

20.3 Kasungu Social Welfare

Samuel Kamalonda

+265 (0) 994882123

20.4 Kasungu District Police Child Protection Officer

Masina Anussa

+265 (0) 881130880

+265 (0) 992923299

20.5 St John of God Counselling Services

Frank

+265 (0) 995889789

Ruth

+265 (0) 997687175

Within School

20.6 Ms Tinyade Masi (DDSL)

+265 (0) 999379923

20.7 Mr Humphrey Sibwakwe (DDSL)

+265 (0) 980546214

20.8 Ms Sphiwe Chinguluma (DDSL)

20.9 Dr Hawkins Gondwe (DHP)

+265 (0) 884457611

21.0 Where to go for further information

21.1 DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

21.2 Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (includes filtering & monitoring and cyber security standards)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges>

21.3 DfE: Behaviour in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>

21.4 DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

21.5 DfE: Preventing Bullying (includes cyber bullying advice)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

21.6 DfE: Relationship Education and Relationship and Sex Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

21.7 DfE: Safeguarding and remote education

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education>

21.8 DfE: Safeguarding practitioners: information sharing advice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

21.9 DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation at school

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

21.10 DfE: Statutory guidance School suspensions and permanent exclusions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

21.11 Home Office: Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines

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

21.12 Home Office: Preventing youth violence and gang involvement

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing youth violence and gang involvement v3 March2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing_youth_violence_and_gang_involvement_v3_March2015.pdf)

21.13 Ofsted: Handbooks and frameworks

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-handbooks-and-frameworks>

21.14 Ofsted: Positive environments where children can flourish

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/positive-environments-where-children-can-flourish>

21.15 Ofsted: Safeguarding concerns, a guide for inspectors

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy/safeguarding-concerns-guidance-for-inspectors>

21.16 Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

21.17 The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation

The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

21.18 UKCIS: Education for a connected world 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-a-connected-world>

21.19 UKCIS using external expertise guidance, September 2022

Using External Expertise to Enhance Online Safety Education (publishing.service.gov.uk)

21.20 UKCIS: Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online, May 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-race-and-faith-targeted-bullying-face-to-face-and-online-a-guide-for-schools>

21.21 LGfL: online safety policy (including filtering and monitoring) and Acceptable Use Policies

<https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre?s=24>

21.22 Childnet cyberbullying guidance

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools/>

21.23 NPCC: When to call the police

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

21.24 Sexualised Behaviour Guidance

NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2685/responding-to-children-who-display-sexualised-behaviour-guide.pdf>

APPENDIX A

Safeguarding levels of need example thresholds

The levels of need in this example are no additional needs, early help, child in need and child protection. This aligns with the guidance provided in Working Together to Safeguard Children. The language and levels used by your local authority and local safeguarding children partnership (LSCP) may differ; however, most will use a similar document outlining the thresholds for each level of need. Familiarising yourself with the document used in your **local area is important**.

No additional needs

At this level, a child's needs are relatively minor, and it is determined that the child and their family don't require any additional support or services to keep the child safe. Needs at this level should not require any formal intervention.

Examples may include:

- **The child displays some poor behaviour at school.**
- **The child is finding a particular subject at school challenging.**
- **The child is struggling to make new friends.**
- **The child has health issues which their GP can resolve.**
- **The child has missed more days of school than would usually be expected.**

Early help

Early help may be appropriate for children at risk, or for whom there are early concerns regarding abuse and neglect. Some families with multiple needs and/or challenging circumstances may benefit from early help. The help given at this level could include parenting support, mental health support, youth services and housing and employment services.

Examples may include:

- **The child is being drawn into anti-social behaviour.**
- **The child is consistently absent from education.**
- **The child is showing early signs of being at risk of radicalisation.**
- **The child appears to be self-harming.**
- **The child is experiencing developmental delays, such as speech and language difficulties.**
- **The child is living in a home where there are concerns about domestic abuse developing.**
-

While these circumstances are serious, they are not yet at a level where the local authority needs to intervene and implement a Child Protection Plan. Instead, an Early Help assessment and plan would be advisable in order to coordinate a response for the

child and their family. A lead practitioner will be appointed in this situation, who may be from a number of suitable professions.

Child in need

A child in need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services or a child who is disabled. A child or family is at this level if their issues continue to escalate, or interventions are not working, and it's felt that the needs are not being met.

The Working Together guidance highlights a need for a child-centred approach to support. Any plans should take into account the voice of the child and their wishes and should consider the strengths of their family alongside their needs.

There should be a record of interventions and support offered previously by services to highlight why a social intervention is required.

Examples may include:

- **The child has chronic or recurring health problems, and their parents have failed to seek treatment.**
- **The child is homeless or living in severely overcrowded or otherwise unsuitable accommodation.**
- **The child is pregnant or likely to become pregnant (and is over 13 years old).**
- **The child lives in a family where the standard of parenting is seriously adversely affected due to substance misuse, ill health or disabilities. For example, If the child is a long-term young carer, or if the parents' capacity to care for them is impacted and this puts the child at risk.**

Child protection

Child protection cases are where there is reason to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The need to help the child is immediate.

In such cases, a referral to children's social care must be made following your LSCP procedures. Children's social care will then decide what action is needed. This may involve further information gathering, undertaking a further assessment or organising a strategy discussion.

Only in the most extreme cases would it be deemed that a child needed immediate protection by the police or through the courts.

Examples may include:

- **The child is being subject to any form of abuse or neglect.**
- **The child is at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation.**
- **The child is at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). Note that any cases where there is evidence that FGM has taken place must be reported directly to the police.**
- **The child is under 13 years old and pregnant.**
- **The child is known to be actively viewing and engaging with extremist materials and ideologies.**

APPENDIX B