



Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

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Introduction

Skills North East (SNE) is committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works here to share this commitment. Staff take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage learners to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the learner.

SNE fully recognises its statutory and moral duty to promote the safety and welfare of those learners who are under the age of 18 years and those adult learners who are deemed to be vulnerable; however, SNE has a moral duty and is committed to the safeguarding of all learners regardless of their age and vulnerability.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and 2004; the education Act 2002, and in line with the government publication: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2016)', the statutory guidance and ['Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)'](#).

Scope

This policy and its procedures will apply to:

- The board
- Employees of SNE
- Learners
- Contractors
- Employers providing a traineeship/apprenticeship
- All other users of SNE
- All SNE Training activities

The policy and procedures will always apply when SNE is providing services or activities that come under the responsibility of the organisation.

SNE recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its learners is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who encounters a learner, their families and carers, has a role to play in safeguarding.

Definitions

Although legislation is specifically related to children and vulnerable adults as defined below, SNE is committed to the safeguarding of all learners and the term learner is used throughout this policy.

Child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

Vulnerable Adult is defined as a person aged 18 years or over and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may include a person who has a learning difficulty, a physical or sensory disability or a mental illness.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners is defined in '[Working Together to Safeguarding Children](#) (2018)' as:

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

Safeguarding actions may be needed to protect learners from the following:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Peer on peer including up skirting
- Serious Violence
- Child criminal exploitation – County Lines
- Neglect
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Child missing from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Mental Health
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting
- Trafficking

Staff need to have an awareness of the different types of safeguarding issues and explanations and definitions. Staff should also be aware that behaviors linked to, for example drug taking, alcohol, abuse, truanting and sexting also put learners in danger.

Looked after children

All staff need to be aware of issues around safeguarding looked after children. The most common reason for young people becoming looked after is a result of abuse and/or neglect.

Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

All staff need to be aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in learners with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behavior, mood and injury relate to the learner's disability without further exploration.
- Learners with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Procedures for Staff

SNE operates a culture of openness and transparency and embeds the principles of the 4 Rs across all our services, ensuring that all staff, volunteers and contractors understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding.

Visitors

All official visits to SNE are required to sign in when entering the office and sign out on their departure. Visitors are not permitted to enter access-controlled areas unless accompanied by a member of staff.

Trainee/Apprentices work setting

SNE has a responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all learners undertaking traineeships/apprenticeships with employers.

SNE will ensure that employers are aware of this policy and their responsibilities of compliance in relation to Safeguarding and the Prevent duty for any learner who is placed with them and that arrangements are in place to ensure that a learner's wellbeing is safeguarded.

The 4 Rs:



If Staff have concerns about a learner:

- If Staff members have any concerns about a learner, this must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead via the cause for concern/disclosure form. Options can include referral to specialist services or early help services. SNE recognises its role in identifying learners who may benefit from early help and providing support as soon as a problem emerges in a learner's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of young people than reacting later. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment and share information support early identification and assessment.
- If early help is appropriate, the Safeguarding Team will liaise with external agencies. The learner should then be monitored and if the situation does not appear to be improving, a referral will be made by a member of the Safeguarding Team to Children's Social Care ensure the learner's situation improves.

If SNE Staff believe a learner is in immediate danger at risk of harm:

- This immediate concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and if a learner is in immediate danger or risk of harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and/or to the police immediately.

If a learner makes a disclosure to a member of staff:

- If a learner makes a disclosure to a member of staff, the learner should be acknowledged, taken seriously and listened to.
- As soon as it becomes clear that the learner is talking about a safeguarding issue, you need to gently stop them and inform them that if they continue, that we have a legal obligation to pass this information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. You cannot promise confidentiality to the learner. Reassure the learner but tell them that a record of information given will be made.
- It is important not to ask too many questions as it is clear that you must not under any circumstances investigate any accusations.
- Allow the learner to freely recall significant events, keeping questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Record the factual details of what has been told to you using the cause for concern/disclosure form.

Concern/Disclosure Form

Contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Safeguarding Team contacts are detailed in Appendix B) immediately to explain the situation and pass on the written notes. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will outline the action that they have to take so that you can explain this to the learner. It may be appropriate for the Designated Safeguarding Lead to meet the learner. You must not take any further action yourself. This includes contacting other staff members/parents/carers or outside agencies.

If a member of staff receives information about a learner from another person

If a member of staff receives information about a learner, which suggests that there is a safeguarding issue or that this is likely, this must be recorded on a cause for concern/disclosure form and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. SNE has a duty to refer certain concerns to the Local

Authority Children's Social Care Officer for the area in which the learner lives or to the police if the learner is in immediate danger.



If a member of staff suspects a learner has a safeguarding concern

If a member of staff suspects that a learner is at risk from a safeguarding issue, they must discuss these concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and not take any independent action. The concerns must be recorded on the Cause for Concern/Disclosure form.

All contact with outside agencies over issues of safeguarding must be approved by the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Duty Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide whether to make a referral to Children's Social Care.

Parents/carers have the right to be informed in respect of any concerns or any actions taken to safeguard and promote their welfare, providing this does not compromise the learner's safety.

Allegations of abuse made against other young people

Staff must recognise that children and young people can abuse their peers and be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse is abuse young people may experience from their peers (people of their own or similar age) perpetrated by a young person/s (under the age of 18 years)/vulnerable adult(s) young person(s) vulnerable adult(s).

Staff need to be aware that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. SNE will take any concerns of this nature very seriously and concerns should be raised in the same way as any other concerns, directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Peer on peer abuse can take the form of bullying (including cyber-bullying) sexting and any other form of sexual or physical abuse including up skirting and initiation/hazing. Gender based issue can also occur for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boy being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Learners with criminal convictions

SNE is committed to the fair treatment of all learners and welcomes applications from a wide range of individuals, including those with criminal convictions. SNE is mindful, however, of the duty of care it owes to its learners, staff and the wider community to act reasonably to protect their health, safety and welfare. Consequently, SNE requires all applicants to disclose any criminal convictions on application and re-enrolment.

If a criminal conviction is disclosed or otherwise brought to our attention, SNE will work with that person to determine the level of risk posed by the conviction to both the individual and/or to others. The individual will be required to complete a Criminal Convictions Disclosure Form providing SNE with further information about the offence and contact details for any relevant third-party e.g. a Probation Officer.

The information given on the Disclosure Form will then be used to assess whether there is any risk posed should the individual enroll on a course with SNE. An interview must take place with the Designated Safeguarding Lead prior to enrolment to approve the application and sign the enrolment form. Where medium/high risk has been identified and enrolment deferred until a decision is reached.

Concerns about another Staff member

It is recognised that sometimes allegations may involve a member of SNE staff. In these circumstances the allegation must be reported directly to the MD and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the absence of the MD, the Quality Director must be informed. On receipt of such as allegation, SNE’s disciplinary procedures relating to allegations of abuse will be followed.

Concerns about safeguarding practices

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the SNE safeguarding practices and that such concerns would be taken seriously by the Management and Leadership Team. If staff members have any concerns about the safeguarding regime, they should raise this initially with the Managing Director. If no immediate action is taken, then appropriate Whistleblowing Procedures are in place for such concerns to be raised with the Management and Leadership Team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with SNE or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 08000280285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

For Children and Young People	
Childline	0800 1111 Childline.org.uk
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)	http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk 0870 000 3344
NSPCC Helpline	https://www.nspcc.org.uk 0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	help@nspcc.org.uk 0800 028 0285 https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/
Internet Watch Foundation	https://www.iwf.org.uk
Social Care link for Safeguarding Concerns	https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

Responsibilities

The board will:

1. Ensure that SNE has an effective Safeguarding and Prevent Policy in place which is updated annually, and that SNE contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance [‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018’](#) and [‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021’](#).
2. Ensure that the Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
3. Ensure that SNE complies with the Prevent Duty as set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
4. Ensure that the policies and procedures in place enable appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote learners’ welfare.
5. Appoint a Board Member with responsibility for Safeguarding and Prevent who will liaise with the MD and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
6. Ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead is appointed to lead on safeguarding, advise/support staff and liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies. They will have status/authority to carry out the role e.g. commit resources to safeguarding and direct staff as appropriate.
7. Give scrutiny to regular reports which will provide detail on the numbers and types of safeguarding incidents and concerns which have arisen.
8. Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.
9. Ensure that a member of the Board Body is nominated to liaise with the designated officer for the relevant local authority and partner agencies in the event of a safeguarding allegation being made against the MD.

The MD

The MD has overall responsibility for and oversight of Safeguarding within SNE and will ensure through SNE Management and Leadership Team that:

1. Safeguarding policies and procedures and any linked Safeguarding policies are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
2. All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding learners and that concerns will be addressed sensitively and in a timely and appropriate manner.
3. Policy/procedures are available to parents/carers and employers on request

DSL

The Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead/s will:

1. Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy, including Prevent, is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are reviewed regularly by the Board.
2. Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is available publicly and that parents/carers and employers are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of SNE in this.
3. Provide an Annual Safeguarding report for the Board, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by self, staff with specific responsibility and all other staff and Board members and number and types of incidents/cases.

4. Ensure the quality assurance of the provision of safeguarding information, advice and guidance and procedures.
5. Ensure there is liaison with employers providing Apprenticeships to ensure proper safeguarding arrangements are in place.
6. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, when deciding to make a referral, by liaising with relevant agencies.
7. Keep detailed, accurate, confidential and secure written records of concerns, disclosures and referrals. Ensure all such records are kept confidentially and securely.
8. Liaise with the Safeguarding Team/any other relevant staff to inform of any issues/ongoing investigations via the Safeguarding Panel.
9. Ensure the Safeguarding Team act as a key point of referral for learners/staff/ parents/carers, offer advice, assess information promptly, take action or refer on to the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead so that SNE can respond swiftly and appropriately to all concerns referrals and disclosures.
10. Have access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

Training

Induction Training for staff is mandatory and should include;

- the child protection policy;
- the behaviour policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies). (See KCSIE (2021))

DSLs attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills are refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.

All other staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff who are involved in the recruitment process.

SNE's Lead Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officers:

Name	Role	Location	Contact Details
Donna Allison	Lead Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer	HQ Annitsford	0191 2504590
Tracey Parkins	Safeguarding Officer	HQ Annitsford	0191 2504590

If you have any concerns, contact the officers or use the email below. Learners should be made aware of this email address.

SNE's Safeguarding E-mail Address: safeguarding@sne.org.uk

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Team:

- The Designated Safeguarding team are the first point of contact for all staff and associates to go to for advice if they are concerned about young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- Have a higher level of safeguarding training and knowledge than the rest of the staff and this is updated every year.
- They are responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is kept up to date and reviewed every year.
- They operate a safer recruitment procedure and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and associates.
- They assess information from staff regarding concerns about young people and/or vulnerable adults, make decisions about whether staff concerns are sufficient enough to notify Children's or Adults Social Work Services or whether other courses of action are more appropriate.
- They ensure that concerns are logged and stored securely.
- They have responsibility to ensure that the organisation's safeguarding policy and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated.
- They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- They know the contact details of relevant statutory agencies e.g. Young Person Referral Assessment Team Police, Local Safeguarding Children Board, and the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations against staff.
- They must ensure that staff are aware of this policy and the associated procedures, identifying any appropriate training that staff may require
- Staff and associates are trained in Safeguarding and Prevent Duty responsibilities.
- SNE has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/associates.
- Information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details on a need to know basis when the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels their having knowledge of a situation is relevant and appropriate. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, when and why.
- Safeguarding records will be stored securely in a central place. Access to these records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be restricted.
- SNE will not disclose to a parent, other relative or carer any information held on a child or vulnerable adult if this would put the child or vulnerable adult at risk of significant harm.

It is not the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Team to decide whether young people and/or vulnerable adults have been abused or not, that is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as Children's Social Work Services, Adult Social Services or the police.

However, keeping young people and/or vulnerable adults safe is everybody's business and all staff should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about children, young people and/or vulnerable adults being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility within SNE to ensure that young people and/or vulnerable adults are safe.

Staff must ensure they have the knowledge to identify Safeguarding Issues, who to go to, and how to report any concerns they may have about young people and/or vulnerable adults being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

All staff will

- Receive Safeguarding on induction
- Will have their Safeguarding training topped up every three years
- Will be kept up to date on safeguarding through email or blogs

All staff are responsible for complying with SNE DBS requirements (enhanced checks reviewed every 3 years) and Data Protection requirements and familiarising themselves with implementing safeguarding procedures.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff must act on the basis that the safety of the vulnerable adult is the overriding concern. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the vulnerable adult and any other adult who may be vulnerable to the same abuse. The vulnerable adult should be informed at the earliest possible stage of the disclosure that the information will be passed on.

SNE notes that the Data Protection Act 1998 allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of a vulnerable adult in accordance with the Information Sharing Protocol.

Whatever happens, staff should always be open and honest with the learner if they intend to take the case further unless the assessment of risk suggests the learner is in immediate danger.

Safer Recruitment

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure SNE operates a safe recruitment policy in line with company procedures.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another agency SNE will require assurance that the agency concerned has policies and procedures in place for safeguarding all learners which are compatible with this policy and procedure and there are arrangements in place to liaise with SNE on these matters.

Prevention

We will ensure that all learners are aware of our safeguarding procedure and receive a copy of our Learner Handbook that outlines safeguarding contact numbers. Learners will all receive a thorough induction that explores safeguarding, including what they can do to report occurrences.

All staff will receive a thorough induction and training relating to safeguarding in relation to preventative action, roles and responsibilities as well as reporting mechanisms.

E-Safety

SNE understands the importance of providing safe access to the wealth of online information and communication tools available to support teaching and learning.

SNE:

- Aims to provide opportunities for all learners to use internet technologies safely as part of their learning activities.
- Is aware of its responsibility to educate learners and staff about potential risks of internet use and the mitigations needed to protect themselves online.
- All IT equipment is provided and maintained through SNE.
- Internet users must not use internet facilities to break the law or incite crime.
- Internet Users must not gain unauthorised access or make unauthorised modifications to computer material (hacking).
- Internet Users must take all reasonable care not to distribute copyright material in breach of copyright.
- Internet Users must take all reasonable care not to distribute defamatory material.
- Internet Users must not display, access, use, extract, store, distribute, print, reveal or otherwise process information which contravenes the law.
- Staff are issued with a work email address and must use this in any communication with learners.

Appendix A

Definitions Forms of abuse and neglect

(Definitions taken from [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSI\) September 2021](#) and the supplementary guidance within KCSI.)

Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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.

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 cyber bullying), causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, 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.

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 not 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.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. 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.

Peer on Peer abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- gender-based violence
- Up skirting, which 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;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- Initiation/hazing type violence rituals

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence

All staff should be clear as to SNE's policy and procedures with regards to peer-on-peer abuse.

Bullying, including cyberbullying:

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as child protection concern when there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’, Where this is the case, SNE Training staff should report concerns to a member of the Safeguarding Team. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, SNE Training may need to draw on a range of external services to support the learner who is experiencing bullying or tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a learner engaging in bullying.

Bullying is behavior by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority for SNE, but staff need to be aware that emotional can be more damaging than physical.

Many experts say that bullying involved an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the

intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.



Child criminal exploitation

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

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; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse exploitation

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years.
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years.
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favor of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

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 [within the UK], 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 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.

Child Missing from Education

All staff should be aware that children going missing from education, 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 female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. SNE Training staff should follow the SNE Training's procedures for tracking attendance and absence.

Children who have a social worker

At SNE, we recognise that when a learner has a social worker, it is an indicator that they are more at risk than most learners. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behavior and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- there may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behavior, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology. Like all forms of child abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17-year old's who can legally consent to having sex.
- Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non- penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g., through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).
- 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; and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. 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.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be found in the guidance document [Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners](#) (DfE 2017)

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

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- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault.
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- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.

- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behavior, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological.
- physical.
- sexual.
- financial; and
- emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge: what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safe lives: young people and domestic abuse](#)

Drugs – This includes alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances ('legal highs') and volatile substances.

Fabricated or induced illness – There are three main ways of the parent / carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- Fabrication of signs and symptoms which may include fabrication of past medical history
- Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may include falsification of letters and documents
- Induction of illness by a variety of means

Faith Abuse

Faith abuse is child abuse linked to faith or belief. This includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in Hindu context): ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies: and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune, such as telephoning a wrong number which is believed by some to allow malevolent spirits to enter the home.

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage) HBV 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 HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Actions: If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers¹⁶ that requires a different approach

FGM

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

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 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a ‘special’ procedure to become a woman

Symptoms of FGM

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. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

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

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers 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 staff along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to 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.

Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for staff to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining learners, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Staff must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still discuss any such case with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the staff does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, staff should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage:

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties 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 to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

[The Forced Marriage Unit](#) has published statutory guidance and multi-agency guidelines, of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fco.gov.uk.

An arranged marriage is not the same as a forced marriage. In an arranged marriage, the families take a leading role in choosing marriage partner, but both parties are free to choose whether to enter into the marriage or not.

Gangs and Youth Violence:

Groups of children and young people often gather together in public places to socialise, and peer association is an essential feature of most children's transition to adulthood. Groups of children and young people can be disorderly and/or anti-social without engaging in criminal activity. Young people on the periphery of becoming involved with street gangs and those young people already involved in some way can be described as 'A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity'.

Youth Violence:

Youth violence, serious or otherwise, may be a function of gang activity. However, it could equally represent the behavior of a child acting individually in response to his or her particular history and circumstances. 'Serious youth violence' is defined as 'any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19', i.e, murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm. 'Youth violence' is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offences.

Most children and young people do not become violent overnight. Their behavior represents many years of (increasingly) anti-social and aggressive acts.

Mental Health

All staff are 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.

Staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy via the note of concern form.

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 health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result, for example, 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 care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal those children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence, a change in friendship or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting/sharing nude and semi-nude image, video or live stream)

Making, possessing and distributing and imagery, video or live streams of someone under 18 which is indecent is illegal. This includes imagery created by under 18s themselves. The relevant legislation is contained in the Protection of Children ACT 1978 (England and Wales) as amended in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales) but guidance is also outlined in Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people via the Gov.uk website.

Specifically, it is an offence to possess and distributing, show and make images of children. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 defines a child, for the purposes of indecent images, as anyone under the age of 18. The latest guidance from the [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)](#) refers to sexual imagery and not indecent imagery as indecent is subjective and has no specific definition in law.

The types of incidents covered by this guidance are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual images of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults constitutes child sexual abuse and this should be reported to the police.

Handling Incidents

1. All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery, videos or live streams should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. An initial review meeting will be held and subsequent interviews with the young people involved, if appropriate.
3. Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
4. At any point in this process if there is a concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

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

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 due to a learning difficulty.
3. What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's development age or are violent.
4. The imagery involves sexual acts and any child in the imagery is under 13.
5. There is reason to believe that a young person is at risk of harm owing to the sharing of imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

If none of the above apply SNE may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. Although the sharing of sexual imagery is illegal, the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) is clear that 'youth produced sexual imagery should be primarily treated as safeguarding issue' and the law was also created to protect children and young people and not to criminalise them.

Privately Fostered Children

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

Relationship Abuse

- **Emotional abuse** – can include constant insults and name calling, isolation from friends and family, controlling what someone wears/where they go, checking up on someone all the time (checking emails, texts, social networking sites etc.) and making someone feel responsible for the abuse.
- **Physical abuse** – can include hitting, punching, pushing, biting, kicking, using weapons etc.
- **Sexual abuse** – can include unwanted kissing or touching, forcing someone to have sex, being made to watch pornography against their will and pressure not to use contraception.
- **Financial abuse** – can include the taking and controlling of money, forcing someone to buy things for someone, forcing someone to work or not to work.
- **Trafficking** is defined as ‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of children by means of threat, force or coercion for the purpose of sexual or commercial sexual exploitation or domestic servitude’(NSPCC).
 - The Palermo Protocol establishes children as a special case for whom there are only two components- movement and exploitation. Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim-whether or not he/she has been deceived, because it is not considered possible for children to give informed consent.
 - A child may be trafficked without crossing any national borders, e.g only within the UK.
 - A child may be trafficked between a number of countries prior to being trafficked into/within the UK. The child may have entered the UK illegally or legally (i.e. with immigration documents). The intention to exploit the child underpins the entire process.
 - The Modern Slavery Act 2015 consolidates current offences of trafficking and slavery and details the different forms of exploitation that a victim of trafficking may be forced into.
 - The exploitation can take place in a number of ways including:
 - Sexual Exploitation
 - Labor Exploitation
 - Criminal Exploitation
 - Domestic Servitude
 - Organ Harvesting

Distinction between human trafficking and smuggling:

- Human trafficking does not include people smuggling, which requires the consent of the person being moved.
- A smuggled person is, however, a potential victim who may be vulnerable to being trafficked at any point in their journey, and the distinction can be blurred. Perpetrators may smuggle people with the intention of exploiting them, or with the intention of facilitating exploitation. Alternatively, the smuggled can become vulnerable to traffickers upon arrival at their destination and subsequently be exploited and/or harmed.

Financial or Material Abuse: This can include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse, misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Appendix B



If at any time a learner and, or a SNE staff member would like to speak to the DSL they are able to do so via email; da@sne.org.uk , and via phone on 0191 250 4590.

Tracey Parkins is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer and can be contacted on 07399 465845 or via email tp@sne.org.uk if the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable.