



# Safeguarding Policy

<b>Approval body:</b>	Mulberry Schools Foundation Trustees
<b>Implementation date:</b>	June 2019
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<b>Next review date:</b>	January 2025
<b>Policy version:</b>	4

### Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
1	June 2019	Original
2	June 2021	<p>Updated in the light of KCSIE 2020</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding mental health to safeguarding definition</li> <li>• Adding Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines to the definitions of abuse in Appendix A</li> <li>• Referencing contextual safeguarding and mental health concerns on the definitions of abuse in Appendix A</li> <li>• Adding a reference to allegations of staff posing a risk to children in the section on Reporting.</li> </ul> <p>Reference to Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding added.</p>
3	June 2022	<p>Updated in the light of KCSIE 2021 and 2022</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding a requirement for Trustees and staff to read the full KCSIE Part 1, rather than the condensed version.</li> <li>• Adding the scope of records.</li> <li>• Adding a statement that reports of abuse will be taken seriously and victims will be supported</li> <li>• Adding child-on-child abuse and domestic abuse to the definitions in Appendix A.</li> <li>• Adding a reference to those with protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010)</li> <li>• Adding a reference to online safety training</li> <li>• Adding a statement about taking reports seriously</li> <li>• Adding a section on training</li> </ul>
4	January 2024	<p>Reference to Foundation Complaints Policy added. Updated to ensure that the policy is in line with Mulberry Schools Trust/Mulberry School for Girls safeguarding policy updates (July 2022) and safeguarding requirements outlined in KCSiE 2023.</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New paragraph setting out that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone if they are being abused.</li> <li>• Additional detail added to definition of domestic abuse.</li> <li>• Inclusion of Appendix 2: Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment</li> </ul>

## 1. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health, safety, well-being and human rights of people coming into contact with Mulberry Schools Foundation (“the Foundation”), particularly children, at-risk adults and beneficiaries of the Foundation’s assistance. The policy aims to protect people from any harm arising from:

- the conduct of staff or personnel associated with the Foundation;
- the design and implementation of the Foundation’s programmes and activities.

The policy lays out the commitments made by the Foundation and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

By virtue of its close relationship with Mulberry Schools Trust, whereby much of the Foundation’s work is undertaken within Mulberry Schools Trust’s schools, the staff and trustees of the Foundation come into contact from time to time with Mulberry Schools Trust students. The Foundation therefore adheres to the full safeguarding policies of those schools. The Foundation does not employ its own staff and the staff engaged by the Foundation are in fact employees of Mulberry Schools Trust. References to “staff” in this policy are intended to include anyone working for or carrying out activities on behalf of the Foundation even where they are directly employed by Mulberry Schools Trust.

This policy reflects the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding and protecting people.<sup>1</sup> Since the majority of the Foundation’s work relates to advancing education for young people, this policy also aligns with the **DfE’s 2023 Statutory Guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education”**.<sup>2</sup> Trustees and staff working on behalf of the Foundation are required to read the full KCSIE Part 1 each year.

The Foundation also follows **Mulberry Schools Trust’s policy on Safer Recruitment**.<sup>3</sup> This policy can be found on the Trust’s website. The Foundation will ensure that staff and Trustees undergo enhanced DBS checks and, in accordance with the Charity Commission’s guidance on safeguarding, will work with Mulberry Schools Trust as appropriate to obtain these checks and ensure safer recruitment.

## 2. Principles

Ensuring the safety and protection of their beneficiaries is an essential aspect of all charities’ work. Unless individuals are safe and treated well, with dignity and respect, it is impossible for them to realise their potential or fully benefit from their involvement with the Foundation.

Over recent years there has been increasing recognition of the way in which vulnerable people can be at risk of harm from organisations that are supposed to help them. As a consequence, there has been a significant increase in the efforts made by organisations to ensure that no harm comes to vulnerable people from contact with their staff or as a result of any of the organisation’s activities.

This duty of care extends beyond statutory safeguarding requirements. The Foundation takes seriously its obligations to operate in such a way as to ensure so far as possible that its work causes no harm to anyone who comes into contact with its work. In this regard, it is noted that the Foundation and its staff and trustees are already required to comply with Mulberry Schools Trust’s own safeguarding policy when working together.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181955/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://mulberryschoolstrust.org/trust-policies-and-financial-statements/>

Given these values and in light of widely recognised risks, the Foundation has developed this Safeguarding Policy to promote protection for all those people it comes into contact with, as well as staff and Trustees, and Mulberry Schools Trust as a partner organisation.

Whenever the Foundation comes into contact with vulnerable groups, it takes responsibility to ensure it is doing all it can to protect such groups from all forms of harm, including abuse, neglect and exploitation and to ensure appropriate action is taken if such harm occurs.

The Foundation also recognises that good safeguarding policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with the Foundation's work.

Accordingly, as part of this Safeguarding Policy, the Foundation will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children and adults at risk;
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding;
- where appropriate, report any concerns to relevant authorities including statutory agencies and the Charity Commission;<sup>4</sup> and
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored. Records will include:
  - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
  - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
  - a note of any action(s) taken, decisions reached and the outcome

This Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the Foundation's work.

### 3. Definitions

In the UK, **safeguarding** means protecting people's physical and mental health, well-being and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

A **child** means anyone under the age of 18.

An **adult at risk** means any adult who by reason of: disability, age or illness; the context they are in; or as a result of social and other inequalities; is or may be unable to take care of or to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

### 4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- the Foundation's Trustees;
- all staff contracted by the Foundation, whether employed or seconded/loaned;
- associated personnel engaged with work, events or activities related to the Foundation, including but not limited to consultants; volunteers; contractors; visitors.

The Foundation expects all organisations receiving funding from the Foundation, or that otherwise work with the Foundation to deliver its charitable activities, to fully support the values and commitments set out in this Safeguarding Policy and to have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity)

## 5. Commitment

The Foundation believes that everyone, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Foundation will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

The Foundation commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through prevention, reporting and response.

The Foundation aims to contribute to building self-esteem and confidence in the people it works with and recognises the positive impact this can have, especially on those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse. The Foundation recognises that people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 may be more at risk of harm. It also recognises its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1988.

## 6. Prevention

The Foundation will:

- ensure all staff and associated personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within, this policy;
- design and undertake its activities in a way that ensures participants feel safe and listened to and that protects them from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with the Foundation. This includes the way in which information about individuals on our programmes is gathered and communicated;
- implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel;
- ensure staff and associated personnel receive training on safeguarding, including online safety, at a level commensurate with their role;
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and with due process.

It is **all staff and associated personnel's responsibility** to contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that maintains the well-being and safety of all, prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of this policy.

## 7. Reporting and responding to concerns

The Foundation will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the people it works with. This includes any concerns of possible/actual harm, including abuse, exploitation, and neglect as defined in Appendix 1 and policy non-compliance, or risk of such, resulting from action or inaction by anyone covered by this Safeguarding Policy. The Foundation takes such reports seriously and will always support victims of abuse.

Internally to the Foundation, staff and associated personnel should report concerns or complaints directly to the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility (Mulberry Schools Trust CEO: [exec@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto:exec@mulberryschoolstrust.org) or via 0207-790-6327), in line with the Mulberry Schools Trust Whistle-blowing Policy if appropriate (available on the MST website). This includes any allegation that a member of staff or associated personnel would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children or young people in a school or college.

When working with partner organisations, including Mulberry Schools Trust, on their premises, with partners' staff responsible for their participants, the reporting mechanism will be defined as part of the planning for the activity, drawing on the procedures of the host or partner school/organisation. If any

person working within or for the Foundation sees something that causes an immediate safeguarding concern in any event wherever hosted, they should raise this immediately with the Lead Safeguarding Contact for that particular joint activity or another member of staff and should not delay in passing this information on.

An allegation of abuse or inappropriate conduct made against a Trustee or staff member working within or for the Foundation must be reported immediately to the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility (MST CEO: [exec@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto:exec@mulberryschoolstrust.org) or via 0207-790-6327). If the allegation is against the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility, or for any reason the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility is unavailable, then the concern should be reported to the Foundation's Chair of Trustees (via 0207-791-7205).

The procedures for dealing with allegations and concerns are detailed in the Foundation's Complaints Policy.

It is **all staff and associated personnel's responsibility** to report any concerns about a young person or vulnerable adult's well-being and safety or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by Mulberry Schools Foundation staff using the agreed systems, or directly to the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility (MST CEO: [exec@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto:exec@mulberryschoolstrust.org) or via 0207-790-6327).

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

The Foundation will follow up all safeguarding concerns and reports raised with the Foundation. It will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy. The Foundation is committed to reporting any incidents to the appropriate regulatory bodies (including the Charity Commission<sup>5</sup>) as required. Where there is evidence that criminal activity may have taken place, we will report to the relevant police and/or safeguarding authorities as appropriate.

The Foundation will offer support to survivors of any harm caused by staff, regardless of whether a formal response is made.

## 8. Training

Trustees receive safeguarding training at induction and then annually to provide them with the knowledge to ensure safeguarding is effective.

Trustees ensure staff and associated personnel receive training on safeguarding, including online safety, commensurate with their role. Many of the Foundation's partners are schools and partner staff have already received training. It is Trustees' responsibility to confirm this.

## 9. Policy monitoring, evaluation and review

Trustees will receive a safeguarding report at each Board meeting. This will include:

- comment on the safeguarding commitments of the applications being considered at the meeting, and any recommendation for improvements to the application documentation;
- comment on the ease of defining safeguarding reporting mechanisms with partner organisations in recent activities, and any recommended changes to approach;

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<sup>5</sup> [www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity)

- numerical information on any safeguarding concerns reported.

These reports, and any new or updated statutory guidance, will feed into an annual review of this policy conducted by the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility. The revised policy will be approved by the full Mulberry Schools Foundation Board.

#### **10. Policy availability**

This policy is available to all staff and partners on the Foundation's website. It is highlighted to all staff at the beginning of each planned activity.

## Appendix 1: Definitions of abuse

It can often be difficult to recognise abuse. It is nevertheless important to know what could indicate that abuse is taking place and to be alert to the need to consult further. Someone can abuse a child/vulnerable adult by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting, by telephone or on the Internet. Outside the family, children/vulnerable adults can be at risk of multiple harms including, but not limited to, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to the person or by a stranger. Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

If you are worried about a child/vulnerable adult it is important that you pass on your concerns immediately, using the reporting mechanisms above.

In addition to the indicators below, it should also be recognised that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

### A. CHILDREN

The Foundation recognises 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 being 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. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. We also recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way.

<p><b>Abuse</b></p>	<p>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. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.</p>
<p><b>Physical abuse</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them</li> <li>• Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, bumps, etc</li> <li>• Injuries which have not received medical attention</li> <li>• Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming</li> <li>• Finger marks or multiple bruising</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruises, bites, cuts, scratches, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation</li> <li>• Flinching or evidence of pain/discomfort during normal activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emotional abuse</b></p>	<p>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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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. Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging</li> <li>• Nervousness, frozen watchfulness</li> <li>• Obsessions or phobias</li> <li>• Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration</li> <li>• Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults</li> <li>• Attention seeking behaviour</li> <li>• Running away/stealing/lying</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sexual abuse</b></p>	<p>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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. 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 known as child-on-child abuse.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any allegations made by the child concerning sexual abuse</li> <li>• Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play</li> <li>• Sexual activity through words, play or drawing</li> <li>• Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults</li> <li>• Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained bruising around or bleeding from the genital area</li> <li>• Stained or bloody underclothing</li> <li>• Unexplained difficulties in walking</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neglect</b></p>	<p>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, 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. Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent hunger</li> <li>• Weight loss</li> <li>• Poor hygiene</li> <li>• Dress inappropriate to weather or activities</li> <li>• Physical problems and medical needs that are not attended</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organised abuse</b></p>	<p>Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Series of complaints from different parents about the same staff/situations/issues</li> <li>• Records regularly being mislaid/poor record keeping</li> <li>• Controlling relationships</li> <li>• Children/activities being visited regularly by “associates” of staff</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Indicators, which are different for boys and for girls, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained gifts or new possessions</li> <li>• Association with other young people involved in exploitation</li> <li>• Changes in emotional well-being</li> <li>• Misuse of drugs and alcohol</li> <li>• Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late</li> <li>• Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</b></p>	<p>CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial</p>

	<p>advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. CSE is a form of sexual abuse and can affect any child or young person under 18, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. It may be a one-off occurrence or may happen over time. The sexual activity may be exploitative even if it appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and 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).</p> <p>The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• older boyfriends or girlfriends; and</li> <li>• sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.</li> </ul>
<p><b>County lines</b></p>	<p>County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.</p> <p>Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.</p> <p>Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.</p> <p>A number of the indicators for CCE and CSE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home</li> <li>• have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)</li> <li>• are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs</li> <li>• are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection</li> <li>• are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity</li> <li>• owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters</li> <li>• have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.</li> </ul> <p>Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals</p>
<p><b>Child-on-child abuse</b></p>	<p>Children can abuse other children. All staff should be alert to changes in behaviour or young people wishing to report child-on-child abuse. All staff</p>

	<p>should challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature.</p> <p>Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);</li> <li>• abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers / other young people;</li> <li>• 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);</li> <li>• 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);</li> <li>• sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos<sup>6</sup>;</li> <li>• 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; and</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domestic abuse</b></p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced the first statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.</p> <p>Domestic abuse includes a range of abusive behaviours from one person to another who are both aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other. Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical or sexual abuse;</li> <li>• violent or threatening behaviour;</li> <li>• controlling or coercive behaviour;</li> <li>• economic / financial abuse;</li> <li>• psychological, emotional or other abuse.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> See UKCIS guidance at <https://ineqe.com/2021/01/13/ukcis/>

	<p>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. Experiencing 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. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships.</p> <p>Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.</p>
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## B. ADULTS

<p><b>Physical abuse</b></p>	<p>Physical abuse is the deliberate infliction of pain, physical harm or injury and includes withholding or misuse of medication.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injuries not consistent with falls or offered explanations</li> <li>• Unexplained loss of hair in clumps</li> <li>• Cuts that are not likely to be explained by self-injury</li> <li>• Finger-marks</li> <li>• Flinching or evidence of pain/ discomfort during normal activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Psychological abuse</b></p>	<p>Psychological abuse is any pattern of behaviour by another that results in harm and may include insults, humiliation, ridicule, bullying, threats, enforced isolation, interference in relationships and contact between consenting adults, coercion, lack of privacy or choice, denial of dignity.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs of strain within a relationship and/ or tension when a particular person is present</li> <li>• Indicators that an individual acts differently when a third person is present than at other times</li> <li>• Suggestions of refusal to allow a choice eg to eat or not eat more or less of particular foods, to dress according to preference</li> <li>• Signs of withdrawal or fear or other changes to emotional state</li> <li>• Signs of unexplained sleep or weight loss</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sexual abuse</b></p>	<p>Sexual Abuse is any sexual activity involving but carried out without the informed consent of an adult at risk. Sexual abuse may include sexual intercourse, inappropriate touching, offensive or suggestive language, upskirting, ‘voyeuristic’ behaviour and exposure to the suggestive or sexually explicit activities of others, including films, photographs, images.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained bruising around or bleeding from the genital area;</li> <li>• Stained or bloody underclothing</li> <li>• Unexplained difficulties in walking</li> <li>• Reluctance of the person to be alone with an individual known to them</li> <li>• Unusual and inappropriate sexualised language</li> </ul>

<p><b>Financial or material abuse</b></p>	<p>Financial abuse is the misappropriation of funds (savings or income) or property of an adult at risk. This may include exploitation, theft or fraudulent use of money, misuse of property or possessions and incurring financial liabilities on behalf of an adult at risk without their informed consent.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained shortage of money despite a seemingly adequate disposable income</li> <li>• Unexplained withdrawals from savings accounts</li> <li>• Unexplained disappearance of financial documents for example bank statements, receipts for non-routine expenditure</li> <li>• Loss of personal possessions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neglect and acts of omission</b></p>	<p>Neglect may be deliberate or by default where the abuser is not able to provide the care and support needed or may not recognise the need for the care and support to be given. The abuser may also be neglecting themselves.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent hunger and / or weight loss</li> <li>• Poor hygiene</li> <li>• Dress inappropriate to weather or activities</li> <li>• Denial of religious or cultural needs</li> <li>• Physical problems and medical needs that are not attended to</li> <li>• Physical problems and medical needs that are not attended</li> </ul>
<p><b>Discriminatory abuse</b></p>	<p>When the adult at risk is harassed or discriminated against because of their age, race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, culture etc</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs of strain within a relationship and/ or tension when a particular person is present</li> <li>• Signs of withdrawal or fear or other changes to emotional state</li> <li>• Unexplained outbursts</li> <li>• Out of character discriminatory language, behaviour</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organisational abuse</b></p>	<p>Where neglect and poor professional practice impact on care. It can occur when poor communication, systems, practice and norms mean the care received is below that what should be expected.</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medication errors</li> <li>• Poor record keeping</li> <li>• Complaints from service users and their family</li> <li>• Loss of personal possessions / clothing</li> <li>• Controlling relationships between staff and service users</li> </ul>
<p><b>Self Neglect</b></p>	<p>Where the adult at risk is neglecting to care for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hoarding</li> <li>• Poor personal hygiene</li> <li>• Unexplained weight loss</li> <li>• Wearing the same clothes for several days</li> </ul>

<p><b>Modern Slavery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical problems and medical needs that are not attended to</li> </ul> <p>Includes forced labour, debt bondage, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and domestic servitude</p> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not being allowed to travel alone or make decisions</li> <li>• Lack of personal possessions</li> <li>• Reluctance to seek help</li> <li>• Poor levels of nourishment, dress and energy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domestic violence</b></p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced the first statutory definition of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Domestic abuse includes a range of abusive behaviours from one person to another who are both aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other. Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical or sexual abuse;</li> <li>• violent or threatening behaviour;</li> <li>• controlling or coercive behaviour;</li> <li>• economic abuse;</li> <li>• psychological, emotional or other abuse.</li> </ul> <p>Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Honour' based violence</li> <li>• Female genital mutilation (FGM)</li> <li>• Forced marriage</li> <li>• Signs of strain within a relationship and/ or tension when a particular person is present</li> <li>• Signs of withdrawal or fear or other changes to emotional state</li> </ul>

This is not an exhaustive list of abuse and its indicators. There could be other forms of abuse we have not discussed in this policy. We ask all our partners to familiarise themselves with this policy and to train their staff who have contact with children and vulnerable adults in child protection and safeguarding, and on the signs of recognising abuse.

## **Appendix 2: Guidance on child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable.

It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. However it is noted that sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex, therefore, it could happen at Mulberry School for Girls.

We are 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” or “just having a laugh”
- Challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable.

Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. As stated previously in this policy, additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children.

Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans or Questioning (LGBTQ) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ.

### Sexual violence

Sexual violence is referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

**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: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his 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: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

### What is consent?

Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. 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.

### Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline.

Sexual harassment 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.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment 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) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment, which might include: consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- 'Upskirting' – this typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) 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 now a criminal offence (Voyeurism Offences Act 12 April 2019) and may constitute sexual harassment.
- Mulberry Schools Foundation considers sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

### Harmful sexual behaviours

Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviours". The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this policy.

Harmful sexual behaviours can occur online and offline and can occur simultaneously between the two.

Harmful sexual behaviours should be considered in a child protection context. Harmful sexual behaviours 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 harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

At Mulberry Schools Foundation we recognise intra familial harms have a significant impact on siblings who may or may not have experienced the same abuse and therefore siblings should also be offered and any necessary support following incidents

Staff who are concerned that a student might be a victim or perpetrator of sexual harassment or sexual violence should follow procedures as laid out in the Safeguarding Policy and inform the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing concerns in written form.