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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Hillcrest New Barn fully recognises its responsibilities about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Our procedure applies to all staff working at the school.

There are five main elements to our procedure:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Raising awareness of Child Protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused. This support is provided in accordance with their agreed individual plans.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Hillcrest works within the guidelines and recommendations of the 'Keeping Children safe' publication (DfE 2016)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening.

It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, including oral and anal rape. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online.



CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION STATEMENT POLICY FOLDER: HILLCREST NEW BARN SCHOOL

This step-by-step guide complements, and should be read in conjunction with, the *Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation*¹ statutory guidance published in 2009. It is intended for frontline practitioners in the statutory and voluntary and community sectors (VCS). It outlines the actions they should take, as a minimum, if they suspect that a child they are in contact with is being sexually exploited.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people (male and female, of a range of ethnic origins and ages, in some cases as young as 10) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators of child sexual exploitation are found in all parts of the country and are not restricted to particular ethnic groups.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are responsible for ensuring that appropriate local procedures are in place to tackle child sexual exploitation. All frontline practitioners need to be aware of those procedures (including ones for early help) and how they relate to their own areas of responsibility. LSCBs and frontline practitioners should ensure that actions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are sexually exploited focus on the needs of the child.

2.0 IDENTIFYING CASES

Frontline practitioners from voluntary and statutory sector organisations (including, for example, health and education) should be aware of the key indicators² of children being sexually exploited which can include:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse; and
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

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

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Return interviews for young runaways can help in establishing why a young person ran away and the subsequent support that may be required, as well as preventing repeat incidents. The information gathered from return interviews can be used to inform the identification, referral and assessment of any child sexual exploitation cases.

In assessing whether a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation, or at risk of becoming a victim, careful consideration should be given to the issue of consent. It is important to bear in mind that:

- a child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching;
- sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence;
- it is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them;
- where sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old does not result in an offence being committed, it may still result in harm, or the likelihood of harm being suffered;
- non consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim; and



CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION STATEMENT

POLICY FOLDER: HILLCREST NEW BARN SCHOOL

- if the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or his or her family has been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent and therefore offences may have been committed.

Child sexual exploitation is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18 years and not just those in a specific age group.

To support staff with the issue of CSE, all staff have participated in an online CSE training workshop.

3.0 REFERRING CASES

Where child sexual exploitation, or the risk of it, is suspected, frontline practitioners should discuss the case with a manager or the designated member of staff for child protection. If after discussion there remain concerns, local safeguarding procedures should be triggered, including referral to local authority (LA) children's social care and the police, regardless of whether the victim is engaging with services or not.

4.0 SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CSE AND IN RECOVERY

Statutory agencies and voluntary sector organisations should reach agreement on the services to be provided to the child or young person and on how they will be co-ordinated. The types of intervention offered should be appropriate to the needs of the child or young person. They should take full account of both the identified risk factors and the child or young person's family and wider circumstances. The latter might, for example, include previous abuse, running away from home or care, involvement in gangs and groups and/or child trafficking. The health services provided might include sexual health services and mental health services or counselling.

Because the effects of child sexual exploitation can last well into adulthood, such support may be needed over a long period of time. For this reason, effective links should be made between children and adult services and between statutory and VCS organisations.

Consideration should also be given to supporting the families of victims, including through the work of organisations like the Coalition for the Removal of Pimping.

5.0 IDENTIFYING AND PROSECUTING PERPETRATORS

The police and criminal justice agencies lead on the identification and prosecution of perpetrators. All frontline practitioners involved with victims of child sexual exploitation should continually gather record and share information with the police as soon as practicable, including data on running or missing episodes.

6.0 SUPPORTING CHILD VICTIMS THROUGH RELATED LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Child victims should be supported throughout the prosecution process and beyond, including through the use of special measures where appropriate⁴. Independent Sexual Violence Advisers or specialist VCS services, where available, may also have an important role to play.