



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Riverbank Academy

Autumn term 2018

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Reviewed by: Jayne Heavey

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Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jayne Heavey

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Gaynor Clarke

Named Governor for Safeguarding: Shona Clapham

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Table of Contents

Definitions	3
Introduction.....	3
Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
Types of abuse	9
Responding to signs of abuse	13
Record-keeping	19
Photography and Images.....	20
Early Help	20
Staff training	20
Safer Recruitment	21
Allegations of abuse against staff	21
Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum	22
Children with Special Educational Needs.....	23
Use of reasonable force	23
Work Experience and Work Related Learning	24
Summary	25
Appendix A	26

Definitions

- 1.1 'Safeguarding' is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) as;
- protecting children from maltreatment;
 - preventing impairment of children's health or development;
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 1.2 'Child Protection' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.
- 1.3 'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.
- 1.4 'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster carers.
- 1.5 'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Riverbank Academy.

Introduction

- 2.1 We recognise that safeguarding and child protection is an essential part of our duty of care to all students and all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is **everyone's responsibility** and **everyone has a role to play in protecting children**. We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', 'will consider the wishes of' and at all times, what is in the best interests of each child.
- 2.2 The purpose of this policy is to:
- promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate Riverbank Academy's commitment to keeping children safe;
 - provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;
 - provide stakeholders with clear information relating to Riverbank Academy's safeguarding and child protection procedures;
 - ensure staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse;
 - ensure all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
 - ensure children are protected from maltreatment or harm.
- 2.3 Riverbank Academy is committed to the following principles:

- all children have the right to be protected from harm.
- children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- all staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- working with other agencies is essential to promote safeguarding and protect children from harm.
- early help and providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

Safeguarding aims

2.4.1 The safeguarding aims of Riverbank Academy, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018), are to:

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm or abuse and act to protect them;
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm;
- ensure we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- recognise all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities;
- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information;
- ensure everyone in Riverbank Academy understands the safeguarding procedures;
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure children are protected to the best of our ability.

2.5 This policy adheres to the following documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018)*¹
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (June 2018)*
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (2015)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (2015)

¹ Guidance marked with an asterisk (*) is statutory.

2.6 Please note that there are a number of other documents (statutory and non-statutory) that inform our policy and practice. A list of these can be found in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018).

2.7 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

1. Code of Conduct Policy
2. E Safety Policy
3. Behaviour for Learning Policy
4. Attendance
5. Whistleblowing
6. Managing Medical Conditions

Links to these Policies can be found in Appendix A and on the school website.

Scope

2.8.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Riverbank Academy. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

2.8.2 Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) in this policy, it should be understood Riverbank Academy will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Governing Body and / or Proprietors.

3.1.1 The school has a Lead to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding. This role is carried out by Shona Clapham. Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities, the Governing Body will:

- ensure they comply with their duties under legislation;
- ensure policies, procedure and training in Riverbank Academy are effective, comply with the law at all times and that allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner;
- ensure Riverbank Academy takes into account the Local Authority and Coventry Local Safeguarding Board policies and supplies information as requested by the CSCB;
- ensure Riverbank Academy has an effective child protection policy, that it is published on Riverbank's website or available by other means and reviewed annually;

- ensure Riverbank Academy has a Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct Policy;
- ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training on induction;
- put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from education;
- appoint an appropriate member of staff from the Senior Leadership Team to the role of designated safeguarding lead;
- ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online;
- Respond to allegations of abuse against the Head Teacher

The Role of the Head Teacher

3.2.1 The Head Teacher will;

- ensure this policy is reviewed annually and ratified by the Governing Body;
- ensure this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff;
- ensure all staff are made aware of the named governor for safeguarding and the designated safeguarding lead;
- ensure the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the role-holder's job description;
- decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hour/out of term activities;
- appoint a 'Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children' to promote the educational achievement of children looked after;
- appoint a lead for online safety;
- ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance and a Single Central Record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children;
- respond to allegations of abuse against all other members of staff;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012);
- ensure that children's social care have access to Riverbank Academy to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018).

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Riverbank Academy is:

Deputy Head Teacher (DSL): Jayne Heavey.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Gaynor Clarke

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Riverbank Academy;
- act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
- be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
- liaise with the Local Authority and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018);
- identify if children may benefit from early help;
- make referrals to Coventry's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where children are at risk of significant harm.
- make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- support the school with regards to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- refer cases to the Police where a crime may have been committed;
- be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the event that they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- undertake training to equip them with the skills to carry out the role and update this every two years;
- ensure all staff have read and understood Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018);
- update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;
- provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves Riverbank Academy;
- attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCO, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of Riverbank's community acts in the best interests of the child;

- regularly meet with the Safeguarding Link Governor and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding in Riverbank Academy;
- liaise with the Head Teacher regarding safeguarding cases and issues.

3.3.2 Further details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018).

The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School

3.2.1 School staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff in Riverbank Academy:

- have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;
- should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused or neglected;
- will be able to identify indicators of abuse;
- will be made aware of: The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; The School Behaviour Policy; The Staff Behaviour Policy; information about the safeguarding response to children missing in education; the role of the designated safeguarding lead and systems in Riverbank Academy that support safeguarding and child protection;
- will be provided with and must read a copy of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) annually and receive annually updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities;
- should know what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and never promise confidentiality when a child makes a disclosure;
- will be made aware of the early help process and understand their role in it;
- should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance;
- may be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care (through the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- should be prepared to make referrals to the MASH if they have concerns about a child's welfare, and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training;
- will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- should be able to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice.
- should always seek advice from the Designated (Deputy) Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure; and

- all teachers should safeguard children’s wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

Types of abuse

4.1 As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse and should be able to recognise signs of abuse. We recognise that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are complex and can rarely be covered by one label. Abuse can take many forms and can involve directly inflicting harm on a child, or failing to protect a child from harm. The four main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect.

4.2 Types of abuse (Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018)

Type of abuse	Information
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 persistent 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-

Type of abuse	Information
Neglect	<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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); b) protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; c) ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); d) ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. <p>It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.</p>
Extremism	<p>Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities based on race, faith or denominations; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist</p>

- 4.3 Indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix B.
- 4.4 If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care (through the MASH) and any member of staff can make this referral. A Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be available at all times, but in exceptional circumstances the member of staff should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or seek advice directly from social care and then take appropriate action. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware as soon as possible.
- 4.5 Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant. Staff should not assume that someone else will report concerns.

4.6 The school recognises any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. The school is particular vigilant to the potential need for early help as all Riverbank students have special educational needs, some have additional early risk indicators such as:

- Physical disability.
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is a privately fostered child.²

4.7 Riverbank Academy recognises that abuse can take many different forms. Staff will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if the academy believes that a child is at risk of or is the victim of:

- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- child sexual exploitation;
- emotional abuse;
- neglect;
- bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying;
- criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines);
- domestic abuse;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- faith-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- gangs or youth violence;
- gender-based violence;
- hate;
- honour-based violence;
- radicalisation;
- relationship abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer on peer abuse);
- sexting;

² Taken from paragraph 18, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018)

- trafficking and modern slavery.

4.8 Riverbank Academy will also take action to protect:

- children missing education;
- children missing from home or care.

4.9 There are other familial issues that can have a detrimental impact on children. We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) to support children and families in the following circumstances:

- children facing the court procedures and/or children in the court system;
- children with family members in prison;
- children who are homeless.

4.10 Riverbank Academy has a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority.

4.11 All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. See Appendix B for further information on the Riverbank MAT Prevent duty.

4.12 If any member of staff is unsure about signs of abuse or neglect, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4.13 See Appendix B for further information and guidance on the above issues.³

Responding to signs of abuse

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a child’s welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. On occasions when the designated safeguarding lead is not available, it should be reported to the deputy safeguarding lead without delay. Although any member of staff can make a referral to Children’s social care, where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

³ Please note that definitions of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect are contained in the main body of the policy. Further information about other safeguarding issues and indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix B.

- 5.2 If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to children's social care or to the Police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- 5.3 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately:
- any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
 - any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories;
 - any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
 - any significant changes in a child's presentation;
 - any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child;
 - any disclosures of abuse that children have made;
- 5.4 There will be occasions where a child discloses abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will:
- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;
 - not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
 - only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions;
 - report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day;
 - only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it;
 - will write up the disclosure and pass it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It is likely they will have a discussion with the DSL/DDSL prior to this.
- 5.5 The Designated (Deputy) Safeguarding Lead will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure. The DSL/DDSL may:
- manage support for the child internally;
 - seek advice from the social worker advice line in the MASH;
 - instigate single agency intervention and work directly with the family to improve the situation;
 - offer an Early Help Assessment to provide multi-agency help to a family;
 - in cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSI / DDSL will refer cases to the MASH for statutory intervention. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the MASH. However, if Riverbank Academy is worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.

- **If parents do not consent to a referral but the school believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to children’s social care.**
- 5.6 For further information about the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board’s ‘Right Help, Right Time’ guidance, which is used by Riverbank Academy to make decisions about protecting children, please visit <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/righthelprighttime>.
- 5.7 See page 18 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018).
- 5.8 In cases where members of staff become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the Police without delay and should do so. Staff should refer this to the DSL/DDSL, but the legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the Police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either;
- **are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or**
 - **observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.⁴**
- 5.9 Riverbank Academy understands that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and peer on peer abuse is taken very seriously. Peer on peer abuse can involve bullying, including cyber-bullying, physical abuse, sexting, sexual violence and/or harassment and initiation/hazing ceremonies. The school recognises that safeguarding issues can manifest as peer on peer abuse.
- 5.8.1 Riverbank Academy will ensure staff understand what is meant by peer on peer abuse and the school policy on peer on peer abuse by:
- Delivering training (Spring Term 2019)
 - Embedding processes into policies such as the Safeguarding Policy / Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- 5.8.2 Riverbank Academy will work to prevent peer on peer abuse by:
- Promoting our core values: care, creativity and motivation
 - Delivering our diverse and individualised curriculum
 - Promoting a telling ethos throughout the school
 - Staff having clearly defined roles and responsibilities

⁴ *introduced in Section 5B of the FGM Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015

- Using appropriate rewards and sanctions
(refer to Behaviour for Learning and E-Safety Policy)

5.8.3 In the event that an allegation of peer on peer abuse is made, Riverbank Academy will investigate this using safeguarding and liaising closely with SLT. Records and outcomes of incidents will be kept on 'My Concern'.

5.8.4 In the event that an allegation of peer on peer abuse is made, victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported through the schools' pastoral support systems.

5.8.5 Riverbank Academy will never pass off peer on peer abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

5.8.6 The different forms peer on peer abuse can take, such as:

- sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

5.8.1 The school will adhere to guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools (May 2018) when responding to incidents of peer on peer abuse.

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery ('sexting')

5.9.1 'Sexting' refers to any sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery between children. This includes:

- a person under the age of 18 creating and sharing sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- a person under the age of 18 sharing 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 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

5.9.2 Riverbank Academy has a responsibility to educate children in the risks relating to 'sexting' and how to keep themselves safe online. See MAT e-safety policy:

5.9.3 Any incidents or suspected incidents of 'sexting' should be reported to the DSL without delay.

5.9.4 Once reported to the DSL / DDSL, the DSL / DDSL will decide on the appropriate course of action. This could include;

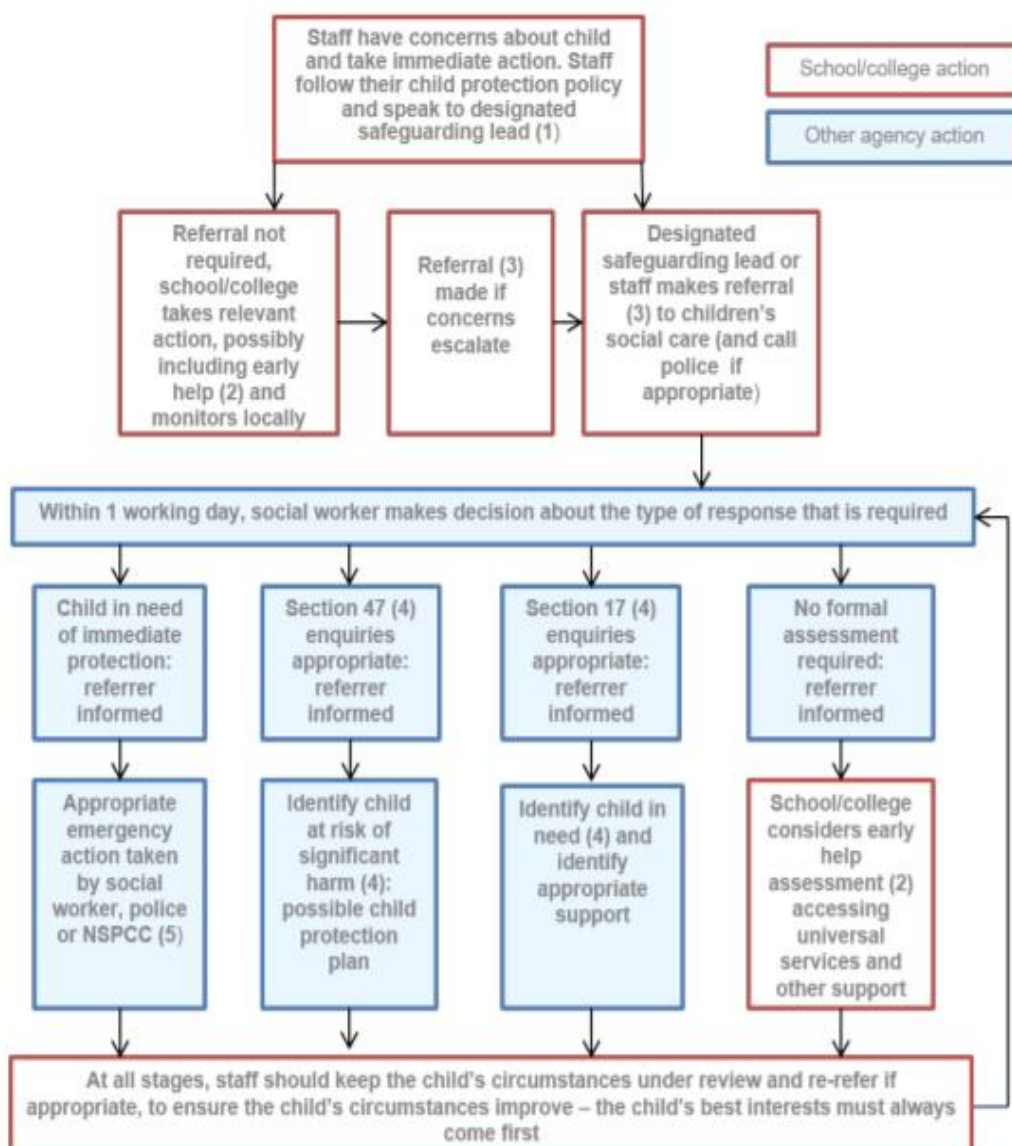
- Confiscation of mobile phones in line with guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation, January 2018);

- Referrals to the Police and/or MASH;
 - Sanctions in accordance with behaviour policy;
 - Support for young people involved to prevent reoccurrence;
- 5.9.5 The school recognises that safeguarding incidents can be associated with factors outside the school and may take place outside of school. We will always consider contextual safeguarding factors when responding to safeguarding incidents.
- 5.9.6 Any incidents of 'sexting' involving the following will result in a MASH and/or Police referral;
- Adult involvement;
 - Coercion or blackmail;
 - Children under the age of 13;
 - Extreme, or violent content;
 - Immediate risk of harm.
- 5.9.7 Staff will not view images or videos on pupil devices. Confiscated devices will be stored securely and passed to the relevant agencies.
- 5.9.8 We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in 'sexting'.
- 5.9.9 We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves. Children will always be supported to retrieve and delete the images.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation

- 5.10.1 Where necessary, searching, screening and confiscation will be used to safeguard a child/children in Riverbank Academy.
- 5.10.2 Riverbank Academy adheres to 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (May 2018).
- 5.10.3 Please see 'Behaviour and Rewards Policy' for further information.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance.

(2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working together to safeguard children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(3) Referrals should follow the local authority's referral process. Chapter one of [Working together to safeguard children](#).

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include section 17 assessments of children in need and section 47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter One of [Working together to safeguard children](#).

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

- 5.11 To raise concerns about children, members of staff should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by telephone to discuss the referral. They should then complete the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and submit this to the MASH. The school will follow up referrals if we do not receive feedback from social care.

MASH Telephone number: 02476 788 555

MASH online referral form: <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren>

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 02476 832 222

Prevent/Channel Referrals: Refer to MASH and to CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.Police.uk

- 5.12 If a child's situation does not appear to be improving following a referral, the school may re-refer the child. We will also consider using the LSCB's Escalation Policy. to ensure that our concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the child.

Record-keeping

- 6.1 A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept in individual children's files. This will be separate from the main school file and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.
- 6.2 Riverbank Academy keeps all safeguarding files electronically, using a system called '**My Concern**'. '**My Concern**' was adopted by Riverbank in 2017, files previous to this date can be found in the schools secure safeguarding drive.
- 6.3 Staff will submit all concerns in writing (blue form) or via internal email to the DSL/DDSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, conversations will also be followed up in writing.
- 6.4 In the event that a child moves school, the safeguarding file will be transferred to the new setting securely and separately from the main school file. Once received by the new school, Riverbank will not retain the information.
- 6.4 The school will seek at least two emergency contacts for every child.
- 6.5 All data processed by Riverbank Academy is done so in line with the General Data Protection Guidelines. Please see the following policies for additional information;

(MAT :data protection policy : <http://www.sidneystingertrust.org.uk/policies>)

Photography and Images

- 7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at school events for education and promotional reasons will be sought when the child joins Riverbank Academy.
- 7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify Riverbank Academy if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.
- 7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other personal information without parental permission.
- 7.4 Photographs of children will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

Early Help

- 8.1 Riverbank Academy is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. Riverbank Academy works closely with the relevant family hub's to work with families in the community to improve outcomes for children:
- 8.2 Riverbank Academy works within the LSCB 'Right Help, Right Time' framework, available on the LSCB website.

Staff training

- 9.1 In order for staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, Riverbank Academy has committed to training staff throughout the academic year. All staff members will be made aware of the academy's safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their induction. As part of this training and their annual refresher, they will also receive;
 - This 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy';
 - The staff Code of Conduct
 - Copies of Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) are available on our school website
 - School procedures for Children Missing Education
 - The school Behaviour Policy
- 9.2 Staff at Riverbank Academy receives ongoing training throughout the year. A detailed list of all training undertaken by staff can be found in the Riverbank Academy's safeguarding key performance indicators.
- 9.3 Riverbank Academy recognises children may engage in risky behaviours that may put them at additional risk of danger. These can include drug taking,

alcohol abuse, truanting and 'sexting'⁵. Staff will be training in these areas in order to be able to further recognise if a child is at risk of harm.

Safer Recruitment

- 10.1 Riverbank Academy is committed to providing children with a safe environment, in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and all staff are subject to the following checks;
- Identity check;
 - DBS clearance;
 - Prohibition from teaching checks (where required);
 - Barred List check;
 - Section 128 checks (as required - leadership and management);
 - Reference check (two references required);
 - Professional qualifications check ;
 - Right to work in the UK check;
 - Further checks for those who have lived outside the UK;
 - Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (as required).
- 10.2 A record of all checks on members of staff will be held on the Single Central Record.
- 10.3 All new members of staff will be required to obtain DBS clearance. Riverbank Academy reserves the right to re-check DBS clearance for any member of staff where information is received that indicates that they may pose a risk to children.
- 10.4 At least one member of every interview panel will have undergone Safer Recruitment training.
- 10.5 We take proportionate decisions on whether to check individuals beyond what is required.
- 10.6 Any visitor to the school who has not been subject to the necessary checks will be supervised at all times.
- 10.7 All safer recruitment practices at Riverbank Academy comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018). See Section 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) for further information.

Allegations of abuse against staff

- 11.1 Riverbank Academy takes all allegations against staff seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) and the LSCB Guidance, 'Managing Allegations against Staff and Persons in a Position of Trust'.

⁵ Also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

- 11.2 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Head Teacher, it must be reported to the CEO, Wendy Tomes (wtomes@sidneystingeracademy.org.uk) and the Chair of Governors, Rakesh Shama (r1sharma@hotmail.co.uk)
- 11.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff other than the Head Teacher, it must be reported to the Head Teacher without delay.
- 11.4 Allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.
- 11.5 The Head Teacher or Chair of Governors should consider if the allegation meets the threshold for Designated Officer intervention. The Local Authority designated officer is Angie Bishop and contact details can be found on the front of this policy.
- 11.6 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority designated officer within 24 hours.
- 11.7 If a child has suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral will also be made.
- 11.8 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority designated officer will provide information and support to Riverbank Academy in managing the allegation.
- 11.9 A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, or would have been removed if they had not have resigned.

Whistleblowing

- 11.10.1 Riverbank Academy operates a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or the school's safeguarding processes to the DSL and Senior Leadership Team.
- 11.10.2 The Senior Leadership team will take all concerns seriously.
- 11.10.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in school, they should refer to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures.

Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

- 12.1 Riverbank Academy recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.
- 12.2 Children at Riverbank will receive the following as part of our promotion of safeguarding across the curriculum:
 - PSHCE Curriculum
 - Sex and Relationships education
 - Child exploitation and online safety sessions / training.

Children Looked After

- 13.1 The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. Riverbank recognises children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities. The Designated Lead for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is Jayne Heavey (Deputy Head Teacher).
- 13.2 Staff will receive training on how to best safeguard children who are Looked-After and Previously Looked-After.
- 13.3 The school will work with Personal Advisors when children leave care (where applicable).
- 13.4 Riverbank is committed to working with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

Children with Special Educational Needs

- 14.1 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018), Riverbank is aware that children with additional needs or disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse and additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect. This could be because:
 - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
 - being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
 - the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.⁶
- 14.2 Staff will be trained in recognising signs of abuse in children with SEN and disabilities.
- 14.3 Staff will take into account the needs of a child when responding to concerns of abuse or when taking a disclosure.
- 14.4 Safeguarding learning opportunities within the curriculum will be appropriately differentiated to ensure all children can access it.

Use of reasonable force

- 15.1 There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children. We will not use any more force than is necessary.

(Refer to Behaviour for Learning Policy)

⁶ Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018

Work Experience and Work Related Learning

16.1 Riverbank Academy will obtain written confirmation from the provider of their Safeguarding procedures to ensure that when a student is placed on work experience or Work Related Learning:

- there is supervision by a person who is in regulated activity;
- the supervision is regular and day to day;
- the supervision is “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children”.

See KCSIE (Sept 18) Annex F for further details

Children with Medical Needs and Administration of Medicine

17.1 The academy will strive to meet the medical needs of students in accordance with the local academy’s *Medical Needs of Students Policy*.

Site Security

- 18.1 Measures will be adopted to aid the safety and security of staff, pupils and visitors to the academy, as well as helping to reduce the potential for arson, theft and vandalism.
- 18.2 Building security procedures will include arrangements to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that unauthorised visitors are prevented from entering the academy premises and that, should these systems fail, procedures are in place to deal with unauthorised visitors should they gain access.
- 18.3 Any visitor working with children who is not DBS cleared must be accompanied by a member of staff at all time.
- 18.4 All visitors must report to the reception desk on arrival. – signage on site advises of this.
- 18.5 All visitors are issued with a badge to be worn at all times. This includes parents, helpers, contractors, LA staff and any other person that is not academy staff. Along with a badge, visitors are also issued with details of whom they should contact if they are concerned about the welfare of any student whilst on site.
- 18.6 Any person on site without a badge will be asked to accompany a member of staff to the Reception desk or asked to leave the site.
- 18.7 Any refusal will be reported immediately to Site Services and the Business Manager. Any aggression will be reported to the Police.
- 18.8 Visitors will not remove any items of academy property without the express permission of academy staff.

Educational Visitors

19.1 We positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers whom we engage to provide learning opportunities or experiences for our pupils. This includes checking that all external providers have appropriate DBS checks, viewing material that will be used beforehand and conducting a social media check on such agencies or individuals.

Contractors

20.1 In accordance with the academy's local Site Security Policy, the academy will ensure that a contractor, or any employee of the contractor, working at the school has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if they have the opportunity for unsupervised contact with children.

Summary

21.1 The school is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child. For further information or if you have any queries about this policy, please contact the school.

Appendix A

The school's safeguarding policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following policies;

The school adheres to Coventry Local Safeguarding Children Board's Policies, which can be found here:

<http://www.proceduresonline.com/covandwarksscb/contents.html>

- [Allegations Against Staff or Persons in a Position of Trust Policy \(LSCB\)](#)
- [Local safeguarding Children Board's Policies](#)
- [DFE 'Keeping children safe in education' \(September 2018\)](#)
- [Escalation and Resolution of Professional Disagreements \(LSCB\)](#)

Trips and visits policy – www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/17774/educational visits guidance Sept. 15

Sidney Stringer Trust Policies

<http://www.sidneystringertrust.org.uk/policies>

- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Critical Incident Plan (Lockdown policy)
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice(Data Protection – GDPR)
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- HR & Governance Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- IT Policy (E safety policy)
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Site Security Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy (Control and restraint)
- Whistleblowing Policy

Riverbank Academy policies:

<http://riverbankacademy.org.uk/policies/>

- Behaviour for learning Policy
- Children/Young people with Medical Needs
- E safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy (available from school)
- Medicine & First Aid Policy
- PSHE Policy
- SRE Policy
- SEND Policy

Appendix B – Further Safeguarding Information

Types of Abuse

As outlined in paragraph 4.6, the school will take action if we believe a child is at risk of or is suffering from abuse. Abuse is not limited to physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. For further information on the definitions of the types of abuse below, please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018, Annex A.

See below for policy information relating to other key safeguarding issues. All decisions taken in responding to concerns of abuse will be taken in the best interests of the child.

Bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school, whether it is in the school or on off-site activities. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** Academy. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

As an Academy we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

All incidents of bullying will be seen as important and will be dealt with in a sensitive, consistent and urgent matter. Sanctions and counselling will be put in place.

Students will be encouraged to feel able to report **ALL** incidents of bullying and to support each other when witnessing incidents. Friends of victims will be encouraged to report bullying if they are aware of it, even if the victims ask them not to. In all cases the victims will be given support to reassure them.

See the following policies for further details:

W:\Policies\Current Academy Policies\Anti bullying Policy Sept 2017-19

Criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines)

We recognise that young people are vulnerable and that there is always the possibility that they can be enticed/ attracted into becoming a conduit for criminal activity of various kinds with or without their knowledge.

Staff will be alert to changes in behaviour or attendance patterns and report any concerns to the DSL.

We work with parents/carers, Police, where appropriate, and young people themselves to heighten their awareness of potential risks and dangers to their well-being through allowing themselves to become involved in crime and to support them positively.

See Behaviour and Rewards Policy for further details

Domestic abuse

The negative effects of Domestic Abuse upon families, children and young people are well documented.

Riverbank Academy works with West Midlands Police as part of Operation Encompass. www.opertaionencompass.org.

The DSL will be informed of any incidents of Domestic Abuse reported to the Police involving families of Sidney Stringer students.

We will support students and families as appropriate. This might include individual mentoring or counselling for students. On occasion, families will also be offered an 'Early Help' protocol as a form of support.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

Fabricated or induced illness

We recognise that fabricated or induced illness can be a symptom of underlying issues for a child or young person.

If we suspect that a student is fabricating illness, the student will be positively encouraged to speak with a trusted member of staff. The issue will be discussed with parents and every attempt made to identify its cause, which will then be addressed, as necessary. The Education Welfare Officer will be informed of concerns and actions taken by school and parents/carers.

Should a child or young person self-harm, they will be encouraged to speak with their tutor or preferred trusted member of staff. Parents will be informed and appropriate support put in place. This could include: internal mentoring or counselling; referral to GP; referral to NHS local School Nurse/SEN school nurse; referral to CAMHS.

Where a member of staff has reasonable cause to believe a child is at risk from, or is the subject of, fabricated or induced illness, the academy's safeguarding children procedures apply. This will require the member of staff to refer his or her concerns to the DSL or DDSL, who is then responsible for making a referral to MASH.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced>.

Faith-based abuse

The values of Riverbank Academy are caring, creative and motivated. They reflect British Values of:

- Democracy.
- The rule of law.

- Individual liberty.
- Mutual respect.
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

These values are promoted via our academic curriculum, tutorial programme and are at the heart of our academy ethos.

Contravention of these values, will result in a student receiving individual or small group mentoring in cultural understanding, School Values, British Values and sanctioning, as appropriate.

If a child or young person is believed to be at risk of harm as a consequence of his/her or family's faith or belief, then the Academy will liaise with family and any outside agencies, as appropriate.

W:\Policies\Current Academy Policies\Equal Opportunities Policy (2)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

Female genital mutilation

Riverbank Academy recognises the legal responsibility of staff to report any incidents of FGM to the Police in addition to the DSL, as it is illegal to practise the procedure in the UK and also to take a female to another country, in order to conduct FGM.

Students will be encouraged to discuss any concerns they have, privately.

Staff will be alert to visible behaviours or attendance patterns which suggest concerns re: FGM and will discuss with families, as appropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Forced marriage

Whilst it is acknowledged that arranged marriage is quite common and accepted within certain cultures, forced marriage is illegal and Riverbank Academy will promote the difference through the pastoral curriculum.

Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have with a trusted member of staff. They are also informed of appropriate actions to take should they feel they are at risk of being forced into a marriage, either in this country or abroad.

Should the academy believe a student is at risk of being forced into an unwanted marriage, Police and Social Care will be informed.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

Gangs or youth violence

Riverbank Academy recognises that conflict can affect any school.

We aim to:

- understand the problems that young people are facing both in school/college and in their local community;
- consider possible avenues of support;
- work with local partners

Through our Tutorial Programme and Pastoral support, we aim to teach conflict resolution, awareness of risky situations, the consequences of violence and coercive and abusive relationships.

Students will also be made aware of Joint Enterprise and legal powers with regard to searching for weapons and/or illegal substances.

Key Staff will be trained in understanding social factors likely to create the risk of a student becoming involved in gang culture.

The academy will work both internally and with external partners to support students in preventative and supportive capacities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

Gender-based violence

Violence of any kind will not be accepted at Riverbank Academy. All violence, including Gender Based violence against women and girls and homophobic violence, will be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour policy and incidents reported to external agencies as appropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

Hate

Riverbank Academy will promote British Values through the academic and pastoral curricula.

Any concerns will be reported to a student's tutor and the DSL, appropriate protocol will be followed in accordance with Preventing Radicalisation, Anti- Bullying and Behaviour policies.

W:\Policies\MAT\MAT Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism Policy Sept 16-19.pdf

<http://educateagainsthate.com>

Homelessness

Riverbank Academy recognises the pressures and issues created for children and young people if they are in a position of being homeless.

Every effort will be made to support the child and young person. This could take the form of:

- provision of study facility for homework
- extra catch-up support, if necessary
- mentoring; offer of Early Help to family
- liaison with relevant external agencies

(So-called) 'Honour-based' violence

So-called 'Honour-based' violence is a crime. This will be made clear to students within the PSHE curriculum.

Students will be encouraged to report any concerns they have regarding potential or actual 'honour based' violence to a trusted member of staff.

<https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse/>

Sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer-on-peer abuse)

Peer on Peer abuse will not be treated as immature 'banter', but will be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. Sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reported to Social Care and, if necessary, the Police.

Sexting

Students will be taught the dangers and legal implications of sexting. They will be supported in protecting themselves via individual and small group mentoring if appropriate. Devices containing inappropriate images will be confiscated and parents/carers of perpetrators will be informed.

Sanctions will be in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

If it is believed that a young person is in an abusive situation or that there is communication of images involving an adult, then external agencies will be informed.

<https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/sexting/what-is-sexting/>

Trafficking and modern slavery

Staff will be alert to attendance patterns and behaviours of students. Should there be any indications that a student might be involved in trafficking, the academy will notify Social Care and the Police.

If it is believed that any student or member of his or her family is in a situation which could be considered to be modern slavery, the academy will inform the Police. Any concerns which the academy might have will be referred to the DSL, who will take appropriate action in informing Police and Social Care.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

Radicalisation and Extremism

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the academy's wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

We acknowledge that there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs, for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular have become major factors in the radicalisation of young people.

Staff are trained in Prevent awareness as part of Safeguarding Training.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection and refer to the DSL if they have any concerns. The DSL will assess whether to refer the student to Channel for support.

Should a student be considered to be at immediate risk of harm or of harming others, the Police and Social Care should be informed without delay.

The academy internet is filtered to prevent students accessing sites which might put them at risk of being radicalised.

The PSHE include strategies used to attract young people and dangers of radicalisation and encourages them to challenge it.

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

W:\Policies\MAT\MAT Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism Policy Sept 16-19.pdf

Relationship abuse

Riverbank Academy expects all students and staff to demonstrate the value of caring, to be the best that they can be and to show Integrity.

Any abuse of a relationship will be managed in accordance with the relevant policy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

Children missing from education, home or care

The school will also take action to protect;

- Children missing education
- Children missing from home or care

Children Missing Education

Riverbank Academy recognises that there are several reasons why a child might miss education and these include:

- failing to make a successful transition
- exclusion
- mid-year transfer of education provision
- families moving into a new area

The academy also accepts that there are some students who might be particularly vulnerable to missing education.

The academy will promote the importance of attendance to parents and students.

Should attendance become a concern, the academy will act in accordance with the Academy Attendance Policy and requirements stipulated in Government statutory guidance:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Children Missing from home or care

Riverbank Academy acknowledges when a child goes missing or runs away they are at risk. Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable.

The academy will attempt to support students prior to their feeling the need to run away and inform family, unless it is felt they are in immediate danger from family. In this case, a referral to MASH will be made.

Should a child run away, the academy will work with family/carers and outside agencies towards ensuring the safety and well-being of the child or young person. Upon return, they will be monitored and supported as necessary.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

Private Fostering

The school has a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority.

The school will do this through a MASH referral. It is important that parents/carers inform the school if a child is going to be staying at an alternative address to that of their primary care-givers for more than 28 days.

Indicators of abuse

See below for possible indicators of abuse. (Taken from *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*, 2015)

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging
- disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start, wetting the bed
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty
- Children with consistently poor hygiene
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends without an obvious reason
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why
- Children who talk about running away
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

The school recognises that the above list of indicators is not exhaustive and staff will receive training on indicators of abuse.

Reasons why some people hesitate to report abuse

The following list contains a range of reasons why people commonly hesitate to report abuse. It is provided for information, but be aware that none of these reasons is a justification for failing to report a child protection concern or disclosure.

- The child asks you to keep silent – keep a secret
- Fear of breaking up the family
- Fear of exposing the child to further abuse
- Fear of breaking a trusting relationship with child/family
- Painful memories of your own abusive experiences

- Fear of reprisals to yourself/your children/family
- Afraid of misinterpreting or overreacting to the situation
- Assuming another agency is dealing with the problem
- The 'rule of optimism' – everything will work out OK
- Assuming one parent/carer will protect
- Believing the child is fantasising/lying
- Being persuaded by the child's retraction
- Allowing a temporary improvement in the child's situation to distract you from the reality of continuing abuse
- Being unable to comprehend the unbelievable nature of the disclosure
- Not understanding procedures

Why children can't tell about abuse

- Threats from abuse – withdrawal of 'favours' or physical threats – may be implicit derived from abuse of power
- Threats from peers also involved in abuse
- May think s/he is to blame and fear arrest
- Fear the loss of the child's world – family, school etc
- May be emotionally dependent on abuser
- May have compartmentalised abuse
- Thinks won't be believed
- Low sense of self-esteem makes disclosure difficult
- May not realise sexual abuse is a crime – thinks its normal
- May not wish to betray abuser
- May fear exposure and particularly public exposure
- May be ambivalent about sexual identity or feel guilt about taking part in abuse
- Lack of faith in justice system particularly for children with disabilities and from ethnic minorities
- Hasn't got adult permission to tell
- Lack of appropriate language skills

Why refer?

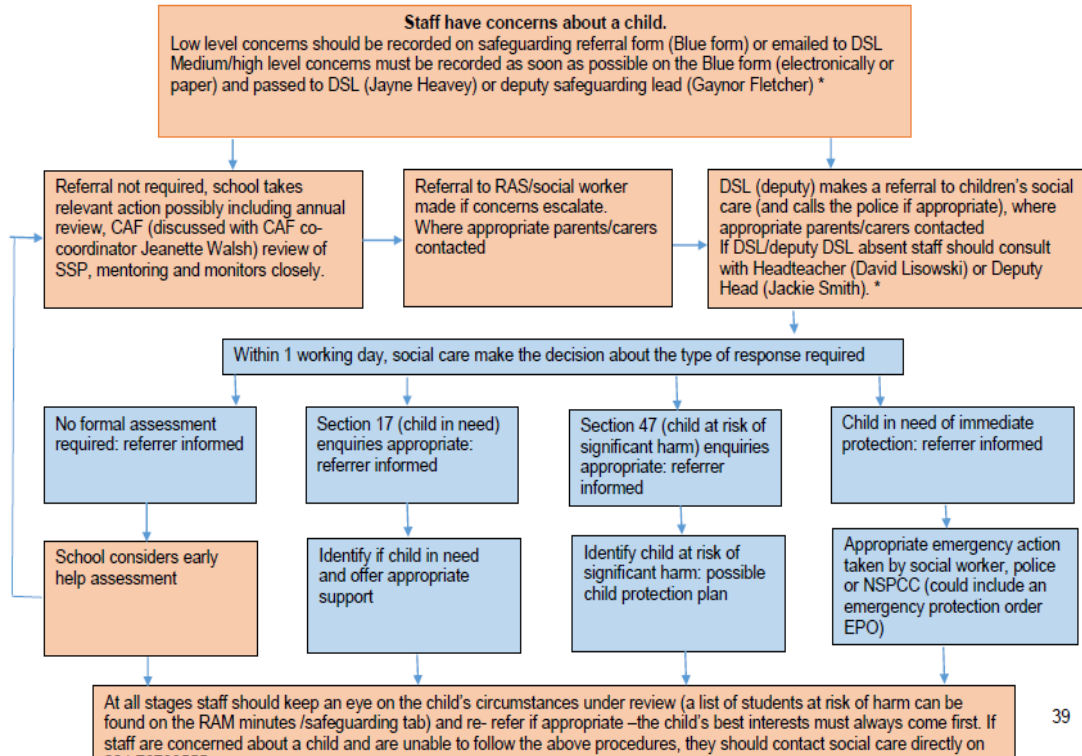
- Children have the right to be safe
- Adults have a responsibility to protect children
- Abuse is damaging
- Child abuse exists in a world of secrecy and silence – the cycle of abuse has to be broken
- You only have one small piece of a jigsaw
- Children rarely lie about abuse
- An abuser may well abuse many other children who also have a right to protection.

Appendix 3

School Social care

Riverbank action where there are concerns about a child

(In the case of allegations of abuse involving a member of staff refer to professional abuse flow chart)



39