

This is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures For **HEROS Education**

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This policy and set of procedures should be read alongside the following documents which also contain safeguarding information:-

- Staff code of conduct
- Safer Working Practice Guidance For Adults Working With Children and Young People
- Health and Safety Policy

These documents can be found on our website.

Quick Reference Contacts Guide

| HEROS Staff | Name | Contact details |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead | Grace Muir | 07770877543 |
| Deputy DSL | Jenny Dimbylow | 01488 638820 |
| Deputy DSL | Rose Pearce | 01488 638820 |
| CEO | Grace Muir | 07770877543 |
| Chair of Trustees | Anne Richardson | 07778026600 |
| Joint Chair | Jackie Hubbard | 07813215238 |

| Children's Social Care Contact Numbers <i>*Linked to threshold guidance</i> | |
|---|---|
| West Berkshire* | 01635 503090 https://www.westberkslscb.org.uk/homepage/young-people-families-carers/concerned-about-a-child/ Emergency duty team: 01344 786543 |
| Oxfordshire* | 0345 0507666 https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/business/information-providers/childrens-services-providers/childrens-social-care-request Emergency duty team: 0800 833408 After 5pm (Mon to Thurs) After 4pm (Fri) |
| Swindon* | 01793 466903 https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20043/child_protection/929/report_suspected_child_abuse_or_exploitation Emergency duty team: 01793 436699 After 4.40pm (Mon to Thurs) After 4pm (Fridays) |
| Wiltshire* | 0300 456 0108 http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-contact Emergency duty team: 0300 456 0100 |
| Adult's Social Care (for students aged 18 and above) | |
| West Berkshire | 01635 503050 https://info.westberks.gov.uk/safeguardingadults Emergency duty team: 01344 786543 |
| Oxfordshire | https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/keeping-safe |
| Swindon | 01793 463555 adultsafeguarding@swindon.gov.uk Emergency duty team: 01793 436699 |
| Wiltshire | 0300 456 0111 http://www.wiltshiresab.org.uk/ Emergency duty team: 0300 456 0100 |

| | |
|--|--|
| Oxfordshire LADO (for reporting concerns/allegations about adults working/volunteering with children) | 01865 815956 Mob: 07833. 436649 alison.beasley@oxfordshire.gov.uk |
| Police | 101 /999 |
| NSPCC Whistle-blowing Helpline | 0800 028 0285 |

Our Commitment To Safeguarding

HEROS Education takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in its care.

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:-

- ensuring adults who work and volunteer at HEROS are provided, at regular intervals, with quality safeguarding training to ensure that they are equipped to identify the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect
- providing clear procedures for adults and children and young people to follow if they are worried about a child or young person.
- sharing information about concerns with parents and carers and where necessary, with agencies who need to know eg; social care
- following safer recruitment guidelines
- providing clear guidance and expectations about adult behaviour, through a code of conduct and ensuring on-going vigilance

Part 1 - Procedures

Worried About A Child or Young Person

You may be worried about a child/young person because you have seen or heard something. You may have noticed a change in their behaviour.

Where a child/young person comes to speak to you directly and tells you information which may suggest they are at risk of abuse, this is known as a disclosure. If a child/young person discloses to you, you should:

- **Listen** to what the child/young person is saying, without displaying any signs of shock or disbelief
- **Allow** the child/young person to talk freely without interrupting
- **Reassure** the child/young person but do not make promises about keeping the information a secret
- **Reassure** the child/young person that this is not their fault
- **Ask** questions only if you need to clarify, take care not to put words in their mouth by asking leading questions
- **Explain** to the child/young person that they have done the right thing by telling you and explain what you will do next, in line with the procedures outlined below.

You may not have received a direct disclosure, but you have over-heard a conversation which worries you. You may have seen a mark on a child/young person which worries you or noticed a change in behaviour.

You have a responsibility to follow the steps below on our flow chart.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Copies of this flowchart are displayed around the site at HEROS Education.

Worried About the safety or welfare of a child?



Report

to a member of the safeguarding team:-

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Grace Muir

Contact number: 07770877543

Deputy DSL – Jenny Dimbylow

Contact number: 01488 638820

Deputy DSL – Rose Pearce

Contact number : 01488 638820

You should report
your concerns as
soon as possible

Record

- Record your concerns on a safeguarding incident form
- If you have seen marks on a child which worry you remember to fill in a body map
- Take the completed concern form (and body map) to a member of the safeguarding team as soon as possible.
- Do not keep copies.

Respond

The safeguarding team will consider what needs to happen next to safeguard the child, using the local authority threshold guidance to support.

This will include taking immediate steps to secure the safety of the child if possible.

Is the child in immediate danger, at risk of significant harm or there is information to suggest they have been harmed?

Yes

If child is in immediate danger contact the police on 999.

Or Contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH in the local authority where the child lives)

Or the child's social worker if they are already 'open' to social care.

No

Contact will be made with a **member of the safeguarding team** at the child's home school and the information shared.

Parents and carers should be informed of all concerns and referrals to MASH, unless this would increase the risk of harm to the child. Discussion will take place with the child's home school to agree who is best placed to have this conversation.

Record-keeping

Any member of staff, visitor or volunteer who has a concern about a child/young person's welfare or receives a disclosure of abuse will make an accurate record, as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context and giving the full date, time and location.

Where possible this will take place **after** initially reporting your concerns to a member of the safeguarding team 'face to face' or via telephone.

Concerns are noted on our safeguarding and child protection concern/disclosure/incident form (See appendix 2). Copies of these forms can be found in safeguarding box files. These box files are located in the education classroom and another in the main office.

Staff may wish to refer to appendix 3 for further guidance with recording.

If emailing the safeguarding form (or any safeguarding /child protection information) to a member of the safeguarding team, the document should be password protected before sending to

Grace@northfarmstud.com

jenni@heroscharity.org

rosie@heroscharity.org

The password should be subsequently text to the recipient.

Body Map

If injuries or marks have been observed which cause concern, these should be recorded on a body map outline (see appendix 4), giving an indication of size and whether there is a defined shape to the mark or injury.

Staff will not take photographs.

Any handwritten notes (not captured on the safeguarding and child protection concern/incident form) will be retained, even if they are subsequently written up.

The completed safeguarding and child protection concern/disclosure/incident form will be passed to a member of the safeguarding team, in person, as soon as possible and in a timely manner. Staff are aware that completed safeguarded forms contain personal and confidential information. If none of the safeguarding team are available on site for the record to be passed to, the completed record will be placed in a sealed envelope and stored securely in the main office until it can be passed in person to the safeguarding team. A telephone conversation with a member of the safeguarding team is essential here to ensure that swift actions can be taken to safeguard the child, where needed.

Staff are aware that a delay in sharing this information can increase the risk of harm for a child/young person.

Information-sharing with the child's home school

HEROS has a duty to share safeguarding and child protection concerns and information involving a child with their home school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes responsibility for this and will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the child's home school, preferably via telephone in the first instance to discuss the concern/incident which has arisen at HEROS.

If the home school request a copy of HEROS records at this stage, a secure transfer will be agreed. This will include password protecting the document and sending via secure e mail address eg Egress.

Personal information about pupils/families must not be sent via unsecure e mail.

Information-sharing with multi-agency professionals

We recognise that effective information-sharing between staff and multi-agency professionals, including schools and social care, is essential for keeping children/young people safe. Where information needs to be shared with external agencies eg social care, this will be password protected and shared via secure e mail eg Egress.

We also recognise that in order to provide a safe environment for our learners it is vital that professionals referring children/young people to our provision share information about safeguarding and child protection concerns, in order that we can keep our learners safe. This includes information about any challenging/disruptive behaviours which the child/young person may display and any related information which may support our provision to offer the very best support.

We ask home schools to include this information when completing the referral form and this is also discussed with parents/carers at their first visit.

Information-sharing with parents and carers

Concerns about the welfare or safety of a child/young person will be discussed with the child or young person's school/college (referred to as home school throughout this document) in the first instance and a decision made about who is the most appropriate person to have a conversation with the parent/carer.

If, having reviewed the information of concern, it is the view of the safeguarding team at HEROS and the home school that this may increase the risk to the child/young person the home school will make contact with social care to share the information about the concerns held by professionals.

Our first priority is the child/young person's welfare and therefore there may be occasions when concerns about a child/young person means that we have to consult other agencies before we contact the parent/carer.

If a referral is to be made to Children's Social Care by HEROS Education, the parent/carer will be contacted by the safeguarding team at HEROS Education and the information within the referral will be shared. There are some occasions when we will be advised not to share the content of the referral with the parent/ carer as to do so may increase the risk of harm to the child/young person.

Storage and retention of safeguarding and child protection records

Records of concern or disclosures are kept and are stored confidentially. They do not form part of the child/young person's educational records and are stored separately.

We store safeguarding and child protection records confidentially in line with Oxfordshire's local authority record retention policy (usually until the child/young person's 25th birthday).

Escalation

Within our organisation

- If a member of staff at HEROS does not see any improvement having reported a concern about a child/young person, they have a duty to re-report to a member of the safeguarding team.
- If it is felt that the safeguarding team is not taking their concern seriously then this must be escalated to the CEO or the Chair of Trustees if there are concerns about the CEO (see quick reference contacts guide on page 2 of this document for telephone number)

With an external agency

- If a member of the safeguarding team feels a decision made by another professional in another agency, including the child/young person's school/college is not in the child/young person's best interests, they must discuss this further. In the first instance, this takes place directly with the professional involved to allow opportunity for decision-making to be discussed and clarified. (Pre-escalation)

- If not resolved at pre-escalation, the issue is then escalated by the CEO at HEROS to the professional's line-manager, in line with the escalation/case resolution policy for the authority the agency sits within.
- At all stages records should be kept.
- The CEO will ensure that the intention to instigate escalation procedures is made explicit and in writing.

Worried About The Actions Of An Adult Who Works/Volunteers With Children/Young People

You may be worried about the actions of an adult who is working/volunteering with children/young people because you have seen or heard something which makes you feel uncomfortable. You may be concerned that the adult's actions are contravening the school's staff code of conduct.

All concerns must be reported following the steps below:-

Step 1

- If you are concerned that a child/young person might be in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm you must act immediately. Do you need to take immediate action to secure the safety of the child/young person?
- Report your concerns directly to the CEO as soon as possible.
- If the CEO is not contactable, report to the most senior member of staff on site.
- If your concerns are about the CEO report to the Chair of Trustees directly. (See page 2 quick reference guide for contact details)

Step 2

- Record your concerns using the school's Safeguarding 'Concern/Disclosure/Incident' form, as soon as possible.
- Remember to record the full date and time, your name and role and keep your record as factual as possible.
- If a concern/disclosure form is unavailable, handwritten notes can be made on a piece of paper. (This must be retained, even if the notes are subsequently written up onto a form).

Step 3

- Record what action you are taking, for example record the name of the member of staff you have reported to.
- The original concern form should be passed to the CEO or the Chair of Trustees, if the concern/allegation involves the CEO. Copies should not be retained by you. If the person you have reported the concern to does not take your concern seriously, you must escalate your concern to the Chair of Trustees, Joint Chair or the Local Authority Designated Officer (see page 2 quick reference guide for contact details)

If emailing concerns to the CEO or Chair of Trustees, the document should be password protected before sending and the egress secure e mail address should be used.

- Ultimately anyone can report a safeguarding concern about an adult working with children into the local authority, asking to speak to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

What happens once a report about an adult working/volunteering with children is reported?

Step 1

- The CEO/ Chair of Trustees will consider the information in the report and initial consideration will be given as to whether this indicates that the person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in close or regular contact with children in their present position or in any capacity.

This will be done by assessing whether there is evidence to suggest that:-

- the person has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- the person has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or

- the person has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he/she **may** pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children

Criteria listed above taken from Part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe In Education' Sept 2020

Step 2

- If LADO involvement is not required, the CEO/Chair of Trustees may need to complete their own enquiries to establish whether any further action is required eg additional training for adult involved, additional staff supervision required, risk assessment required. Written records must be made of the subsequent decision-making process and reasons for decision-making, together with actions and outcomes.

Step 3

- If it is decided that there is evidence to suggest the concern meets one or more of the above criteria the CEO/Chair of Trustees should contact the LADO immediately.

Step 3

The LADO will decide on further action:-

- no further action after initial consideration and closure, or
- advice and follow up from LADO or
- strategy discussion/meeting

If no further action by the LADO is agreed HEROS Education may be asked to complete their own enquiries and report the findings back to the LADO at the conclusion.

If further action is agreed, the LADO will agree with the police whether or not a strategy discussion/ meeting needs to take place. If it is agreed that the threshold has not been met for a strategy discussion/meeting, an allegations management meeting may be held. The main purpose of this is to ensure the safety of the children and ensure the process is concluded promptly, ensuring the accused staff member has adequate support.

Where an allegation is substantiated this will be referred to in any references provided by HEROS Education for the individual if and when they apply for new positions.

Employers have a duty of care for their employees.

The CEO/Chair of Trustees must put in place support for the adult at the centre of the concern/allegation.

Statutory requirements in relation to individuals who are on the barred list

At the end of the allegation process if a member of staff or volunteer is removed from their position for causing harm or posing a risk of harm or they leave whilst investigations are on-going, HEROS Education has a duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service via a referral.

We understand, as an education provider, that if we know or have reason to believe that an individual is barred, we are committing an offence if we allow the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

See Appendix 1 for definitions of the four main categories of abuse

Specific Safeguarding Themes and Issues And Additional Actions Which May Need Considering

Neglect

What do we mean by neglect?

Working Together defines neglect as :-

'The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result 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.'

What are the indicators of neglect?

The following is a summary of some of the indicators that may suggest a child is at risk of or being neglected:-

Physical indicators of neglect

- ☐ Constant hunger and stealing food
- ☐ Poor personal hygiene - unkempt, dirty or smelly
- ☐ Underweight
- ☐ Dress unsuitable for weather
- ☐ Poor state of clothing
- ☐ Illness or injury untreated

Behavioural indicators of neglect

- ☐ Constant tiredness
- ☐ Frequent absence from school or lateness
- ☐ Missing medical appointments
- ☐ Isolated among peers
- ☐ Frequently unsupervised
- ☐ Stealing or scavenging, especially food
- ☐ Destructive tendencies

Peer On Peer Abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. We understand that the child/young person who is perpetrating the abuse may also be at risk of harm. We will make every effort to ensure that the perpetrator is also treated as a victim and supported appropriately.

What is peer on peer abuse?

Peer on peer abuse can take the form of:-

1. Bullying (including Cyberbullying)

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)
- Racist and Religious Bullying: A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
- Sexual, Sexist and Transphobic Bullying: includes any behaviour, whether physical or non- physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls;
- Homophobic Bullying: targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
- Disablist Bullying: targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way or exploiting a certain aspect of the victim's disability.

[What action is taken in response to concerns about bullying?](#)

Child/young people who attend our provision have the right to learn in safety. We do not tolerate bullying of any kind and will challenge derogatory language and behaviour towards others. We may have to re-consider the child/young person's placement at HEROS Education if this behaviour persists.

2. Child Sexual Exploitation

The definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) states that:-

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

It is important to remember that there are different models of CSE (see section below on Exploitation), including peer on peer sexual exploitation. Many children are not aware of the exploitation as they have a genuine belief that they are loved by their boyfriend / girlfriend or are acting in accordance with their peers. They are often recruited into exploitation by those who they trust, those of a similar age and with similar hobbies. Often the nature of peer on peer exploitation encompasses a sense of peer pressure and wanting to fit in.

3. Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Sexually harmful behaviour from children does not always occur with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a child engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the child who instigates it as well as the child it is intended towards. For this reason, consideration will always be given to how the child displaying the behaviour is supported, in addition to the 'victim' of the behaviour. This may

include a referral to social care. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse.

Taken from Tri.X 'Peer on Peer Abuse' Briefing 198 (Feb 2017)

4. Sexting

Harmful sexual behaviour also includes sexting when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture may occur in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, children are not even aware that they could be committing a criminal offence.

Taken from Tri.X 'Peer on Peer Abuse' Briefing 198 (Feb 2017)

Responding To A Sexting Incident

[See also the UK Safer Internet Centre and SWGfL guidance 2016](#)

Step 1 - If a device is involved, endeavour to secure the device and switch it off. Report immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL.

Step 2 - The DSL / deputy will consider the following:

- Significant age difference between the sender/receiver involved
- If staff recognise the child/young person as more vulnerable than is usual (ie at risk)
- If the image is of a severe or extreme nature
- If the situation is not isolated and the image has been more widely distributed
- If this is not the first time the child/young person has been involved in a sexting act
- If other knowledge of either the sender/recipient may add cause for concern (ie difficult home circumstances)

Step 3 - If these characteristics present cause for concern, then the DSL or deputy will report the concern to the child/young person's school/college. The police may also be contacted at this point.

Step 4 - A record of the incident will be made using our safeguarding concern form, including actions taken / not taken and the justification for these decisions (linked to the points above).

5. Sexual harassment and sexual violence

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children/young people of **any age and sex**. It can also occur through a group of children/young people sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child/young person or group of children/young people. Definitions of sexual violence and sexual harassment can be found in the document listed below.

[See also Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(May 18\)](#)

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments may be written for child/young persons, who have been identified as being at increased risk of peer on peer abuse (considered for both the child/young person perpetrating the abuse and the child/young person who is the victim.)

These will be shared with the parent/carer and the child/young persons concerned.

Domestic Abuse

The government's definition of domestic abuse is:-

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of sexuality or gender. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:-

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial; and
- Emotional

Exploitation and Serious Violent Crime

We recognise that children can be exploited sexually or criminally. They may be at risk of or involved in serious violent crime.

What is Child Criminal Exploitation?

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:-

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

CCE can include children being forced to shoplift or pickpocket, forced to threaten other young people, forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money around the local area or across counties (County Lines)

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

The definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) states that:-

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

Indicators that a child/young person may be at risk of or involved with serious violent crime include:-

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions - these can indicate children/young people have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
- Increased absence from school and alternative provision
- Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups

- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

Honour-based abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation

What is honour-based abuse?

Honour-based abuse encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast-ironing.

What action is taken in response to concerns about honour-based abuse?

Abuse committed in the context of preserving honour often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can involve multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what action to take.

Our safeguarding procedures will be followed here and staff should speak to a member of the safeguarding team immediately if they suspect a child or young person is at risk of honour-based abuse. Safeguarding teams will contact children's social care/ adults social care for anyone 18 or above and local protocols will be followed.

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

Female Genital Mutilation

What is Female Genital Mutilation?

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this.

It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways.

The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother; and/or death.

Key points

- FGM is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to take a British National or permanent resident abroad to undergo FGM or help someone who is trying to arrange to have FGM performed.
- FGM is an unacceptable practice for which there is no justification. It is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls.
- FGM is prevalent in 30 countries. These are concentrated in countries around the Atlantic coast to the Horn of Africa, in areas of the Middle East, and in some countries in Asia.
- FGM is a deeply embedded social norm, practised by families for a variety of complex reasons. It is often thought to be essential for a girl to become a proper woman, and to be marriageable. This practice is not required by any religion.

Risk Factors

The most significant factor to consider when deciding whether a girl or woman may be at risk of FGM is whether her family has a history of practising FGM.

In addition, it is important to consider whether FGM is known to be practised in her community or country of origin. It is important not to make assumptions that all girls from these communities are at risk.

A parent may request permission for their child to travel overseas for an extended period. This is sometimes requested leading into or out of a school holiday (often the summer break).

Response To Concerns About A Child/Young Person Who May Be At Risk Of Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

What are the indicators that may suggest a child/young person is at risk?

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside education
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- advocating violence towards others

The internet provides children and young people with access to a wide-range of content, some of which is harmful. As an education provision we recognise that extremists use the internet, including social media, to share their messages.

As highlighted on our safeguarding flow chart, all concerns involving a child/young person's safety/welfare will be reported to a member of the safeguarding team, as soon as possible and in a timely manner.

In most cases, the safeguarding team will speak to a member of the safeguarding team at the child's/young person's home school or college, unless there are concerns about the child's/young person's immediate safety, in which case our safeguarding team will contact social care in the local authority where the child/young person resides.

Additional Support For Child/Young People

Child/young people with special educational needs and disabilities

As an education provider, we recognise that children/young people who have special education needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding and child protection challenges. These can include:-

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child/young person's disability without further exploration
- children/young people with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted upon by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Supporting child/young people with mental health issues

Some children/people can be more vulnerable than others to issues such as depression, anxiety, self-harm or eating disorders. Our staff and volunteers need to be particularly vigilant about children/young people who have experienced abuse, bullying, bereavement, have learning difficulties or are in care, as these circumstances can impact on their mental health.

Signs of possible mental health issues include:-

- noticeable weight loss or gain
- physical injuries
- change in personality eg mood swings
- frequently missing lessons
- social isolation
- lethargy and disinterest
- tearfulness or appearing anxious
- lack of focus in class
- change in educational performance

Behaviour And Attendance

As an education provider we recognise that there can be links between safeguarding and child protection concerns and:-

- incidents of disruptive and challenging behaviour
- poor attendance

Both of these aspects can be indicators that a child/young person may be experiencing one or more forms of abuse.

Behaviour

We aim to provide a positive, respectful and successful learning environment for all of our students to ensure that they value themselves and develop positive self-esteem. We acknowledge poor choices of behaviour will occur which will always be addressed in a quiet, calm supportive way. Listening to students and treating all fairly hopefully ensures we understand the underlying reasons for the poor behaviour. Volatile incidents are de-escalated by moving students away with support and calming, restorative work undertaken by our trained staff as required.

Parents are regularly contacted to ensure we are working together in partnership for their children and incidents discussed. Teachers from the child's home school will also be part of regular formal and informal reviews.

Our 'clean slate' policy means that students have each day as a new start and support is given to those with difficulties at a particular time to work towards behaviour goals.

Students who repeatedly disrupt the enjoyment and learning of others or who cause themselves or others to become unsafe may be removed from the provision. Students may be removed for a short period of time or longer if required. Such recommendations would be decided by HEROS Education after discussion with all parties concerned.

Positive -handling of a child/young person

Where physical intervention is required to keep a child/young person safe we will respond in line with the DfE guidance 'Use of reasonable force' July 2013.

We may intervene to:-

- prevent a child/young person leaving the classroom/the site where allowing the child/young person to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a child/young person from attacking a member of staff or another child/young person, or to stop a fight; and
- restrain a child/young person at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

All incidents of positive handling are recorded in a bound book and reported to parents/carers. The bound book is kept in the office with the Education Officer and Deputy DSL (Jenny Dimbylow). Where physical restraint is used with a child, a copy of the record will be sent securely to the home school.

The child's/young person's home school will be asked, as part of the referral to the provision, whether there is a positive handling plan in place for the child/young person. A copy of this will be requested if in existence.

Attendance

We recognise the importance of children/young people attending education regularly, including attendance at this provision.

Any unexplained absence is followed up on the first day of absence by the attendance officer.

Where possible, we hold more than one emergency contact telephone number for each child/young person/family.

Attendance is recorded on a daily basis. For each day that the child/young person attends our provision contact is made, by the attendance officer, with the home school to confirm they have arrived safely.

We recognise that children with poor attendance or missing from education may be more vulnerable and potentially are exposed to higher degrees of risk. Attendance information is therefore considered within the wider remit of safeguarding and child protection. Staff are aware that episodes of unexplained absence could indicate safeguarding concerns and the need for support.

Part 2 – Policy

How is the information in this set of policy and procedures disseminated?

Our staff induction programme includes a safeguarding section and new staff are asked to read this safeguarding and child protection policy and set of procedures.

Visitors, volunteers and external staff who visit our provision are asked to read a shortened version of the policy and procedures.

Home schools working with HEROS Education are able to access this safeguarding policy via our website.

How do we ensure parents and carers understand our role in safeguarding children/young people?

We are committed to helping parents/carers understand our responsibility for the welfare of all children/young people and our duty of care.

This policy and set of procedures are available to parents and carers via our website.

Roles And Responsibilities

It is the role of our Board of Trustees to ensure that all statutory duties with regard to safeguarding and child protection are fulfilled, as detailed in chapter 2 of 'Working Together To Safeguard Children' July 2018. HEROS Education completes an annual audit of safeguarding, in partnership with the Chair of Trustees. This self-evaluation is quality assured with a visit from an independent consultant. Where weaknesses or areas for development are identified, the Board of Trustees monitors the implementation and impact of identified actions to address these issues.

Safer Recruitment Procedures

Our recruitment and selection process

All adverts for roles at our provision include the following statement:-

'HEROS Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our recruitment process follows safer recruitment guidelines. The post is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check and satisfactory references. The postholder is expected to work in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.'

A person specification and job description will be provided for applicants as part of the vacancy pack.

Applicants are required to complete an application form, including:-

- personal details, current and former names, current address and NI number;
- information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted;
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment;
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- details of referees/references. These should include the applicant's current/most recent employer if applicable. A follow up conversation will take place with the referee if any of the information provided is vague.
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

Interview process

Interviews are completed as 'face to face' meetings and involve a member of the safeguarding team. Interview questions are agreed prior to the interview to establish:-

- what attracted the applicant to the post and their motivation for working with children/young people
- the applicant's skills and experience of working with children/young people, which are relevant to the role
- the reason for any gaps in employment or where a candidate has changed jobs or location frequently

Checks completed on successful applicant

- An enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, is required for any staff who will be engaging in regulated activity (working unsupervised with children). This is required for any staff employed since 2002. Prior to this staff were checked against List 99.
- Identity checks are completed (with photo identification eg passport or photo driving license), together with proof of right to work in the UK
- Qualifications are checked
- If an individual has lived or worked outside of the UK an overseas police check / certificate of good conduct may be required.

Visitors and externally employed staff

Where staff from external organisations are working with our child/young persons, we ensure that we receive a letter of assurance which confirms that the relevant checks are in place, including a barred list check if the individual is working in regulated activity. Visitors are asked to provide proof of identity and if required, DBS information.

Induction of new staff

Following appointment, we offer new staff a programme of safeguarding and child protection induction. This includes:-

- Safeguarding and child protection training
- The safeguarding and child protection policy and set of procedures
- The staff code of conduct
- Acceptable use policy
- Opportunity to meet the safeguarding team

Training For Adults Working In Our Provision

We are committed to ensuring staff know and understand:-

- the signs and symptoms of abuse;
- how to identify children/young people who may be at risk;
- their responsibility for referring concerns to the designated safeguarding lead / deputy;
- the procedures for reporting safeguarding /child protection concerns about adults working with children/young people (allegations)

Formal training

Safeguarding and child protection training is provided on a regular basis to all staff to enable them to carry out these requirements. This is basic awareness of safeguarding and child protection and includes the possible signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond effectively.

Additional training for Designated Safeguarding Leads and deputy DSLs

The statutory requirement for DSLs and deputy DSLs is to renew training every 2 years. We work in line with this requirement.

Our deputy DSLs have completed advanced training to the same level as the DSL, in line with the requirements of our Local Authority.

Reading Requirements

All staff are required to read:-

- our safeguarding and child protection policy
- our staff code of conduct

Staff are asked to sign to confirm their understanding and accept responsibility for following up any questions or queries they have arising from reading these documents.

Whistle-blowing

We expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees and trustees and will treat seriously any concern raised about illegal or improper conduct. The law provides protection for employees who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'. A qualifying disclosure is one made in the public interest by the employee who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence
- a miscarriage of justice
- an act creating risk to health and safety
- an act causing damage to the environment
- a breach of any legal obligation
- a concealment of any of the above

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for the employee to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be committed, a reasonable belief is sufficient. The employee has no responsibility for investigating the matter; it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

In the first instance, unless the employee reasonably believes the CEO to be involved in the wrongdoing, any concerns should be raised with the CEO. If he/she believes the CEO to be involved, then the employee should proceed straight to the Chair of Trustees.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern with either of the individuals identified above the [NSPCC whistle-blowing](#) helpline is available to them.

Date final policy completed:- 31.7.20

Date ratified by the CEO and Trustees of Hero's Education:-

Date disseminated to staff at HEROS Education:-

Date for review: December 2020

This policy and set of procedures is based on guidance set out in the following documents:-

- Working Together To Safeguard Children (DfE July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education (Sept 2020)

- Safer Working Practice Guidance For Adults Working With Children and Young People (Safer Recruitment Consortium Sept 2019)
- Local safeguarding arrangements for Oxfordshire, West Berkshire, Swindon and Wiltshire
- South West Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures

Appendix 1 – Definitions of Abuse (taken from Working Together July 2018)

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.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result 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.

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-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone."

Sexual Abuse

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

**Safeguarding and Child Protection
Concern / Disclosure / Incident Form
CONFIDENTIAL**

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Date: | | Name and role of person completing page 1 of this form | |
| Time: | | Date and time read by DSL / Deputy DSL | |
| Name of child: | | DOB: | |
| Location (if applicable) | | | |
| <u>What have I heard/seen/noticed which concerns me?</u> | | | |
| <p><i>Remember, if you have seen marks on a child which worry you, these should be recorded on a body map. Do not take photographs.</i></p> | | | |
| Why am I worried? | | | |
| Action taken by person(s) above: | | | |

Appendix 3 Prompt sheet

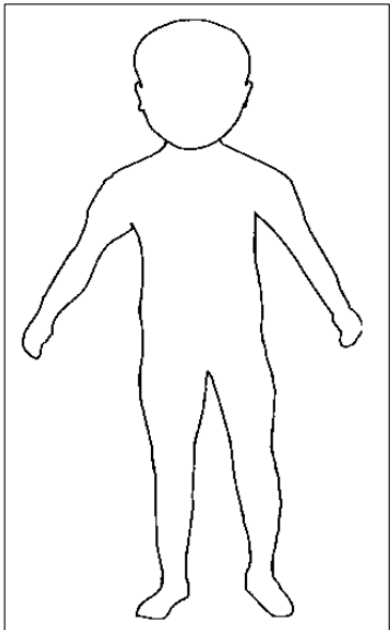
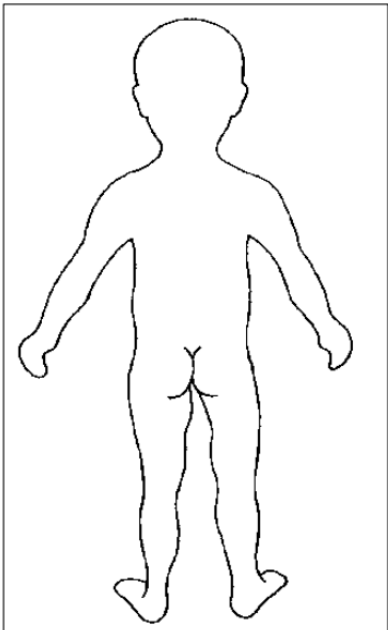
Safeguarding and Child Protection Prompt sheet

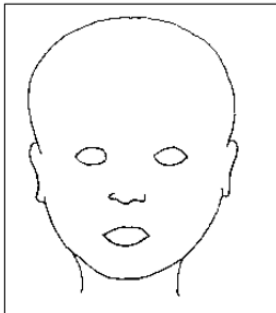
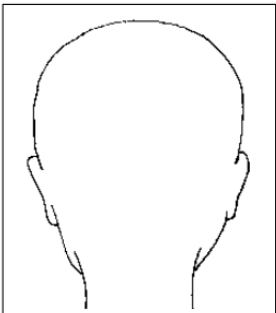
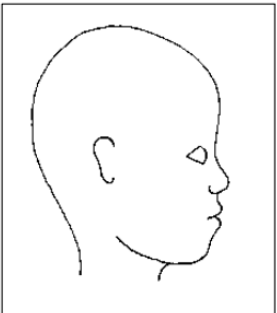
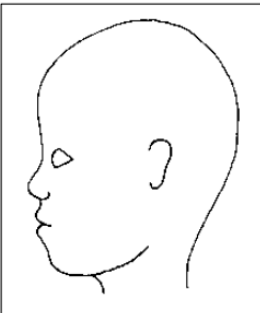
This form is intended to be used, alongside the concern/incident form, to support staff with the recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns/incidents.

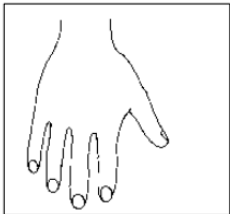
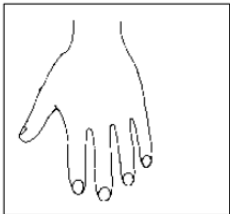
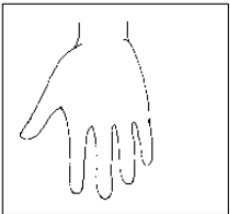
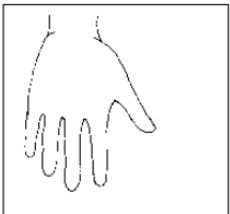
Have you remembered to include:-

1. **what is it that you have seen/heard/noticed which concerns you?** Remember if you have noticed a mark on the child/young person, it is really important to complete an attached body map, giving an indication of the shape, size and location of the mark.
2. **clear and factual information about what you have seen/heard/noticed?** If you have included your opinion in your report, have you made it clear that this is your opinion?
3. **full names of those involved and where possible, reference to staff roles?**
4. **why what you have seen/heard/noticed concerns you?** What are worried will happen if this concern/incident is not responded to?
5. **any actions you have already taken?**
6. **whether you have spoken to parents/carers about the concern/incident?** Remember, you may need to seek advice from a member of the safeguarding team if you are unsure about whether speaking to the parent may increase the risk to the child/young person. If the parent is the alleged perpetrator you must always seek advice from the safeguarding team before speaking to the parent/carer.

Appendix 4 – Body Map

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Body Map For _____ Date completed _____ | | Provide information here about relative size and if the mark is a particular shape/ has a defined edge for example. |
|  |  | |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| Right hand top | Left hand top | Right hand bottom | left hand bottom |