Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Appendices A-D

January 2017

Appendices for Safeguarding Policy

These appendices accompany the Safeguarding Policy and cover the following three areas:

Appendix A   -   Peer on Peer Abuse
Appendix B   -   Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)
Appendix C   -   Online Safety
Appendix D   -   Private fostering arrangements and looked after children

Appendix A – Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be alert to the risk of peer on peer abuse and understand their role in preventing, identifying and responding to it. Staff should know that children are capable of abusing their peers, they should never dismiss abusive behaviour as a normal part of growing up, or 'banter', and should not develop high thresholds before taking action. Peer on peer abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults.

What is peer on peer abuse?

For these purposes, peer on peer abuse is any form of abuse perpetrated by a child towards another child. It can take many different forms including, but not limited to, serious bullying (including cyber-bullying)[1], relationship abuse[2], domestic violence[3], child sexual exploitation[4], youth and serious youth violence[5], harmful sexual behaviour[6], and gender-based violence[7].

These categories of abuse rarely take place in isolation and often indicate wider safeguarding concerns. For example, a teenage girl may be in a sexually exploitative relationship with a teenage boy who is himself being physically abused by a family member or by older boys. Equally, while children who abuse may have power over those who they are abusing, they may be simultaneously powerless to others.

Youth produced sexual imagery can but does not always constitute abusive behaviour. All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to with reference to the School's Youth Produced Sexual Imagery Policy (see Appendix B) and in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

What role does gender play?

Peer on peer abuse often manifests itself differently for boys than it does for girls. For example, girls seem to be at greater risk of sexual assault and/or exploitation, whereas boys seem to be at greater risk of physical gang-related violence and serious youth violence.

When does behaviour become abusive?

It can be difficult to distinguish between abusive behaviour which should be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out below, and behaviour which does not constitute abuse, such as low level

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[1] Please see the School's anti-bullying policy.

[2] https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse/

[3] This type of abuse relates to abuse between children aged 16 and 17 who are or have been intimate partners or family members. The abuse includes but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

[4] This is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. This abuse can be perpetrated by other children or by adults. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, children are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.

[5] Serious youth violence is any of the most serious offences where the victim is aged 19 or below, including murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm. Youth violence also includes assault with injury offences.

[6] This is any sexual behaviour by a child or young person which is outside of developmentally "normative" parameters. This can (but does not always) include abusive behaviour such as sexual assaults.

[7] This is violence that is directed against one gender as a result of their gender.

bullying (where the School's anti-bullying policy should be followed) or age appropriate sexual experimentation.

Factors which may indicate that behaviour is abusive include (a) where it is repeated over time and/or where the perpetrator intended to cause serious harm: (b) where there is an element of coercion or pre planning; and (c) where there is an imbalance of power, for example, as a result of age, size, social status or wealth. This list is not exhaustive and staff should always use their professional judgment and discuss any concerns with the DSL.

How can I identify victims of peer on peer abuse?

By being alert to children's well-being and to signs of abuse. Signs that a child may be suffering from peer on peer abuse overlap with those relating to other types of abuse (please see section C of the Safeguarding Policy for indicators of abuse) and include (a) failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard you would ordinarily expect; (b) physical injuries; (c) having difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing; (d) becoming withdrawn, shy, experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety, panic attacks, suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much; (e) drugs and/or alcohol use; (f) changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age. Again, this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse.

Are some children particularly vulnerable to abusing or being abused by their peers?

Any child can be affected by peer on peer abuse and staff should be alert to signs of such abuse amongst all children. Research suggests that (a) peer on peer abuse is more prevalent amongst children aged 10 and older although it also affects younger children, including by way of harmful sexual behaviour; (b) children who are particularly vulnerable to abuse or to abusing others include those who have (i) witnessed or experienced abuse or violence themselves; (ii) suffered from the loss of a close family member or friend; or (iii) experienced considerable disruption in their lives.

How prevalent is peer on peer abuse?

Recent research suggests that peer on peer abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse affecting children in the UK. For example, more than four in ten teenage schoolgirls aged between 13 and 17 in England have experienced sexual coercion (Barter et al 2015). Two thirds of contact sexual abuse experienced by children aged 17 or under was perpetrated by someone who was also aged 17 or under (Radford et al 2011) and over a third of young boys in England admitted to watching porn and having negative attitudes towards women (University of Bristol and University of Central Lancashire 2015).

What should I do if I suspect either that a child may be being abused, or that a child may be abusing others?

If a member of staff thinks for whatever reason that a child may be at risk of abuse from another child or young person, or that a child may be abusing others, the member of staff should report their concern to the DSL without delay in accordance with Section B of the Safeguarding Policy. If a child is in immediate danger, or at risk of harm, a referral to children's social care and/or the police should be made immediately (see Section B of the Safeguarding Policy).

How will the DSL respond to concerns of peer on peer abuse?

The DSL will discuss the behaviour with the member of staff and will where necessary take any immediate steps to ensure the safety of the victim(s) or any other child.

Where the DSL considers or suspects that the behaviour might constitute abuse children´s social care should be contacted immediately and in any event within 24 hours of the DSL becoming aware of it. The DSL will discuss the incident with children's social care and agree on a course of action, which may include (a) taking any steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of any children affected; (b) further investigation; (c) referral to other agencies such as the police (where a crime may have been committed), CAMHS, a specialist harmful sexual behaviour team and/or youth offending services; and (d) a strategy meeting.

Any response should be decided in conjunction with children's social care and other relevant agencies and should:

- investigate the incident and the wider context and assess and mitigate the risk posed by the perpetrator(s) to the victim(s) and to other children;

- consider that the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the children involved;

- treat all children (whether perpetrator or victim) as being at risk - while the perpetrator may pose a significant risk of harm to other children, s/he may also have considerable unmet needs and be at risk of harm themselves;

- take into account the complexity of peer on peer abuse and of children´s experiences and consider the interplay between power, choice and consent. While children may appear to be making choices, if those choices are limited they are not consenting;

- take appropriate action in respect of the perpetrator – any action should address the abuse, the causes of it and attitudes underlying it. Factors to consider include: the risk the perpetrator(s) poses and will continue to pose to other children, their own unmet needs, the severity of the abuse and the causes of it. Disciplinary action may be appropriate, including (a) to ensure that the perpetrator takes responsibility for and realises the seriousness of his or her behaviour; (b) to demonstrate to the perpetrator and others that abuse can never be tolerated; and (c) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the victim and other children in the School. Permanent exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the victim(s) and other children in the School;

- provide on-going support to victim(s) including by (a) ensuring their immediate safety; (b) responding promptly and appropriately to the abuse; (c) assessing and addressing any unmet needs; (d) following the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy (including where the child is in need of early help or statutory intervention); (e) monitoring the child´s wellbeing closely and ensuring that s/he receives on-going support from all relevant staff members within the School; (f) engaging with the child´s parents and any external agencies to ensure that the child´s needs are met in the long-term;

- consider the lessons that can be learnt from the abuse and put in place measures to reduce the risk of such abuse recurring. This may include, for example: gender and equalities work, work around school safety, security and supervision, awareness raising for staff, students and parents about a particular form of abuse, training for staff on handling certain types of incidents or abuse.

How does the School raise awareness of and reduce the risk of peer on peer abuse?

The School actively seeks to prevent all forms of peer on peer abuse by educating students and staff, challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse, encouraging a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the school community, and responding to all cases of peer on peer abuse and any cases of bullying (no matter how trivial) promptly and appropriately.

Children are educated about the nature and prevalence of peer on peer abuse via PSHE, they are told what to do if they witness or are victims of such abuse, the effect that it can have on the victims and the possible reasons for it, including vulnerability of the perpetrator. They are regularly informed about the School's approach to such issues, including its zero tolerance policy towards all forms of bullying and peer on peer abuse.

Staff are trained on the nature, prevalence and effect of peer on peer abuse, how to prevent, identify and respond to it.

Appendix B – Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as 'sexting' there is no clear definition of 'sexting'. According to research, many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet.' Yet, recent NSPCC research has revealed that when children are asked 'What does sexting mean to you?' they are more likely to interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know.'[8] Similarly, a recent ChildLine survey has revealed that many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images.

This policy only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by children. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal, and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools (amongst other agencies) when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

On this basis, this policy introduces the phrase 'youth produced sexual imagery' and uses this instead of 'sexting'.[9] This is to ensure clarity about the issues this advice addresses.

What is youth produced sexual imagery?

'Youth produced sexual imagery' best describes the practice because:

- 'Youth produced' includes children sharing images that they, or another child, have created of themselves.

- 'Sexual' is clearer than 'indecent'. A judgement of whether something is 'decent' is both a value judgement and dependent on context.

- 'Imagery' covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the policy).

What types of incidents are covered by this policy?

Yes:
- A child creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer (also under the age of 18).

- A child shares sexual imagery created by another child with a peer (also under the age of 18) or an adult.

- A child is in possession of sexual imagery created by another child.

No:
- The sharing of sexual imagery of children by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse and schools should always inform the police.

- Children sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which do not contain imagery.[10]

- Sexual imagery downloaded from the internet by a child.[11]

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[8] For the purposes of this policy 'child', 'youth' and 'young person' refers to anyone under the age of 18; 'adult' refers to anyone aged 18 or over

[9] This is in accordance with the new advice *Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people*, which has been published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety

[10] All such incidents should be responded to with reference to the School's Online Safety Policy at Appendix C, and in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy

[11] As above

- Sexual imagery downloaded from the internet by a child and shared with a peer (also under the age of 18) or an adult.[12]

Disclosure

Disclosure about youth produced sexual imagery can happen in a variety of ways. The child affected may inform a class teacher, the DSL in School, or any member of the School staff. They may report through an existing reporting structure, or a friend or parent may inform someone in School or colleague, or inform the police directly.

All members of staff (including non-teaching staff) should be aware of how to recognise and refer any disclosure of incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery. This will be covered within staff training and within the School's Safeguarding Policy.

Any direct disclosure by a child should be taken very seriously. A child who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in School is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves.

Handling incidents

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to a member of staff's attention:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible.

- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate School staff.

- The DSL will follow the procedures and guidance set out in '*Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people*'.

- There should be subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).

- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm.

- At any point in the process if there is a concern a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Education

Teaching about safeguarding issues in the classroom can prevent harm by providing children with skills, attributes and knowledge to help them navigate risks. The School will provide children with opportunities to learn about the issue of youth produced sexual imagery, as part of its commitment to ensure that they are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities – as also referred to in the School's Online Safety Policy at Appendix C.

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[12] As above

Appendix C - Online Safety

All staff should be aware of the risks posed to children by technology and the internet and should understand their role in preventing, identifying and responding to harm caused by its use. This Policy should be read alongside the School's E-Safety Policy and which sets out the School's approach to online safety in further detail, as well as the School's Youth Produced Sexual Imagery Policy (see Appendix B)

The School has adopted a whole school approach to online safety which (a) captures the range and complexity of the risks and of children's experiences of those risks; (b) seeks to mitigate those risks as far as possible without depriving children of the significant benefits provided by technology and the internet; and (c) handles all cases of online harm appropriately and with sensitivity.

What are the risks?

The risks posed to children by the internet and technology are wide-ranging and include risks resulting from:

Content - being exposed to harmful material
This includes but is not limited to (a) violent pornography or sexual images of children which affect a child´s perception of girls, love and relationships; (b) material promoting harmful behaviours such as self-harm or eating disorders; (c) propaganda or material promoting extremism, radicalisation and/or terrorism; (d) material showing or depicting extreme violence or brutality; and (e) social media such as Facebook and Instagram which can provide children with distorted and unrealistic images of others' lives, causing some children to feel inadequate or distressed about their own lives.

Contact - being subjected to harmful interaction with others online
This includes but is not limited to (a) cyber-bullying; and (b) contact from individuals seeking to groom children for the purposes of sexual abuse or radicalisation.

Conduct - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of or causes of harm
This includes but is not limited to (a) responding to and engaging with individuals seeking to groom or abuse children; (b) youth produced sexual imagery.

Online harm can be caused via a number of different media, including but not limited to: mobile phones and apps; social media; the internet; and video games.

How can I identify a child who may be at risk of online harm?

Any child may suffer from online harm and all staff should be alert to the risk of it. Indicators that a child may be being abused or harmed online overlap with other indicators of abuse which can be found at Section C of the Safeguarding Policy. For further indicators that a child may be suffering from online harm, please see here.

What should I do if I suspect that a child may be at risk of or suffering from online harm?

Follow the procedure set out at Section B of the Safeguarding Policy and discuss any concerns with the DSL immediately. The DSL will discuss the incident with you and agree on a course of action in accordance with the safeguarding procedures set out in the Safeguarding policy.

What preventative measures is the School taking?

Pupils are educated about the risk of online harm – including youth produced sexual imagery, and the ways to mitigate those risks in PSHE, computing classes, assemblies and tutor groups.

Staff are trained on the risks posed by technology and the internet and the ways in which they can prevent, identify and respond to cases appropriately and with sensitivity to cases of online harm.

The School actively engages with parents to ensure a joined up approach when responding to cases of harm, and to ensure as far as possible that parents are aware of and understand the risks of it, are able to identify and respond appropriately to cases of online harm.

The School takes measures to limit children's exposure to these risks from the school's IT systems, including by putting in place appropriate filers and monitoring systems which protect children from harm whilst not over-blocking.

Information sharing

Cognita and the School recognise the fundamental importance of information sharing in protecting children from harm and promoting children's wellbeing. The importance of information sharing between agencies is highlighted in a number of serious case reviews which demonstrate that where information is not shared, concerning patterns of behaviour are often missed and children often do not receive the support they need see link.

The School shares information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the guidance set out in Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015) and in Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers view link and view link here.

The DSL is trained on the above guidance and works with staff to ensure that (a) fears about sharing information do not stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children; (b) they understand and follow this guidance; and (c) they feel confident about the ways in which they share information, including with parents, other staff, and external professionals and agencies.

Appendix D – Private fostering arrangements and looked after children

Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in residential schools; children's homes or hospitals are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age. Examples of private fostering situations include:

- children and teenagers living apart from their families for a variety of reasons e.g. if a parent is ill, has had to temporarily move for work or there has been an argument within the family

- children with parents working or studying elsewhere in the UK or with parents overseas

- children on holiday exchanges

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement s/he should raise this with the DSL. Where Children's Social Care are not already aware of the circumstances the DSL make a referral to them.

Cognita recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well but are aware that safeguarding concerns may be raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that the child has been trafficked into the country.

Looked After Children

A child who is being looked after by their local authority is known as a child in care. They might be living with foster parents; at home with their parents under the supervision of social services; in residential children's homes; or other residential settings like schools or secure units. They might have been placed in care voluntarily by parents struggling to cope. Or, children's services may have intervened because a child was at significant risk of harm.

As a result of their experiences both before and during care, looked after children are at greater risk than their peers; they are, for example, four times more likely than their peers to have a mental health difficulty. Providing a secure, caring environment and enabling such children to develop strong, trusting and stable relationships with professionals is critical to their safety and wellbeing.

Cognita ensures that staff receive training on looked after children, including on the reasons children become looked after, their legal status, the support that staff can provide to keep such children safe and the ways in which they can maximise educational stability for looked after children.

The DSL (a) is responsible for ensuring that any looked after children are adequately supported by staff in school; (b) has contact details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the virtual school head for children in care; (c) ensures that relevant staff members have sufficient information about the child's looked after legal status and care arrangements; and (d) works with the virtual school head to discuss how staff can best support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs in the child's personal education plan.