

# ERA EDUCATION COMPANY

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

September 2020 (next review September 2021)

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## 1. Introduction

All children and young people will have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy applies to **all** staff, including senior managers, paid staff, local guardians, drivers, host families, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of this organisation.

We believe that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe.

Purpose:

- To inform all staff of their responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people and to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities will be carried out.
- To inform on the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and on other areas' services where Era Education are operating.

Era Education company has a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment in which children can thrive.

All Era Education staff therefore receive appropriate safeguarding training during their induction training (which is updated regularly), so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All temporary staff/volunteers are made aware of the policies and procedures and trained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead including Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. We recognise the Director of Children's Services, within the Local Authority has the overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in the area. They have a number of statutory functions under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 which make this clear. This policy is to add detail to expectations of staff/volunteers to expect specific duties to happen in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to

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suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are or who takes any further action.  
“Children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.” (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

## 1a. Terminology

*Safeguarding* and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of 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.

*Child Protection* refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

*Staff* refers to all those working for or on behalf of Era Education guardians, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

*Child* includes everyone under the age of 18 years old. Those over 18 but on a roll of an education setting are referred to Adult services for support.

*Parent* refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## 2. Ethos

- Establish and maintain an environment where Era Education company’s staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the company whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that children, who have additional/unmet needs, are supported appropriately. This could include referral to Early Help services or specialist services if they are a child in need or have been / are at risk of being abused and neglected.
- Protect children and young people in our care from maltreatment and impairment.
- Consider how children may be reminded about *safeguarding*, including online safety, when in the care of Era Education.

Those working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘*it could happen here*’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and develop a culture where *Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility*.

- ### 3. Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Child Protection Policy
- This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, volunteers and visitors. This policy is reviewed annually by the company. It is implemented through Era Education induction and training program, and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy is monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs. Vitalija Abare) through staff performance measures and day to day practice.

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## 4. Statutory Framework

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, Era Education acts in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education Act 2002
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures (Effective Support for Children and Families)
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education ( September 2020)**
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0- 25 years. HM government 2014
- Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges; DfE May 2018.
- The Prevent Duty 2015
- Oxford OSCB Safeguarding Information Pack

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2018) requires Era Education to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the South West Child Protection Procedures ([www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Era Education follows similar safeguarding procedures dependent upon which geographical area it is working in at the time.

Era Education ensures that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which: a child may have been abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect: a member of staff or volunteer has behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child or that indicates they would pose a risk of harm.

## 5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Vitalija Abare, Director, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Era Education. As Director, the postholder has the appropriate status and authority within Era Education to carry out the duties of the DSL including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.

The DSL is always available for staff in Era Education or other professionals to discuss any safeguarding concerns. DSL contact details are: mob. +447557532717 or email [info@eraeducation.co.uk](mailto:info@eraeducation.co.uk) Also this is 24/7 number for any emergency situation.

### 5a. Responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The DSL refers all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the Local Authority Children's Services (Safeguarding and Specialist Services) and/or Police (cases where

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a crime may have been committed) or to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern.

- Liaise with other key stakeholders or equivalent to inform them of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations or Section 42 where adults are concerned
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Support staff members around requests for involvement to other agencies.
- Utilise, implement, scrutinize and monitor the use of Early Help Assessments in Era Education.
- Work with relevant staff in the provision to ensure Era Education services are safe and secure.
- Ensure recording child safeguarding and child protection files are correctly drawn up with effective chronologies and regularly reviewed to scrutinise any patterns or drift/outstanding actions
- Ensure Era Education' Single Central Record is correct at all times and safe recruitment procedures are upheld.
- Ensure Era Education risk assessments are maintained and completed to support staff and children feel safe.
- Undertake the necessary training and ensure it is effectively and regularly shared within the setting
- Liaise closely with the student's school, parents, host family, driver to ensure the best outcome for the student

## 5b. Training

The DSL undergoes the Local Authority's formal training every two years. The DSL also undertakes Prevent (WRAP) awareness and disseminates this information in addition to this training. The DSL's knowledge and skills should be refreshed at least annually.

Other requirements are:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments. (EHA)
- Have a working knowledge of how different local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands Era Education safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need.
- Understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals with actions and outcomes.
- Obtain/disseminate access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.

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- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures Era Education may put in place to protect them.
- Attend the Local Authority's education DSL conferences in Era Education primary regions that are held regularly for updates

## 5c. Raising Awareness

The DSL ensures Era Education policies are known, understood and used appropriately.

- Ensure Era Education guardians safeguarding and child protection policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
- Ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of Era Education in this.
- Link with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) and other Safeguarding boards to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Where children leave Era Education, ensure their file for safeguarding is appropriately and securely forwarded as necessary and obtain notification of its safe arrival.
- Ensure all Era Education staff (Guardians, Primary Carer within each Host Family, drivers) receive suitable induction and on-going training in Safeguarding and know how to access more information or seek clarification.
- Ensure all Era Education staff have access to and have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.

## 6. Supporting Children

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child.

Children who may require early help will be offered **early** intervention through Early Help support services for families.

All staff are aware of the early help process, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, including sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment of a child's needs. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This also includes staff monitoring the situation and feeding back to the DSL any ongoing/escalating concerns so that consideration can be given to a request for involvement to Children's Services in liaison with the child's school if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Staff working within Era Education will also be alert to the potential need for early help for children also who are more vulnerable. For example:

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- Children with a disability and/or specific additional needs
- Children with special educational needs
- Children who are acting as a young carer
- Children who are showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour especially if there is a concern that it is exploitative
- Children missing education
- Children whose family circumstances present challenges, such as substance abuse, adult mental health or learning disability, domestic violence
- Children who are showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- Children with poor attendance or high medical absence
- Children suffering peer on peer abuse

Era Education staff members are aware of the main categories of maltreatment: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. They are also aware of the indicators of maltreatment and specific safeguarding issues so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.

(See Appendix A for information on further descriptors of abuse and specific safeguarding issues)

## 6.1 Children with SEN and disabilities

There's a concern sometimes, for children with SEN and disabilities, that their SEN or disability needs are seen first, and the potential for abuse second. If children are behaving in particular ways or they're looking distressed or their behaviour or demeanour is different from in the past, our staff need to think about that being a sign of the potential for abuse, and not simply see it as part of their disability or their special educational needs.

## 6.2 Emergency Contacts for Children

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) says that provisions should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in case of emergencies. Era Education endeavour to maintain at least two contact numbers for every child on roll.

## 6.3 Mental and Emotional Health of Children

It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood. Era Education offers clear support and guidance for children both when they are at school and with a host family.

## 6.4 Local Issues and Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents can be associated with factors outside the setting and between children outside of school. This is called *contextual safeguarding*. Era Education staff are aware of the definition of *contextual safeguarding* when reporting concerns and must ensure all information and background detail is given to the DSL when discussing concerns. We are aware that in different regions there will be many local issues that can impact on the

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safeguarding of children and we endeavour to be aware of all local issues and work with children to ensure they are safe.

## 6.5 Homestays

Era Education students can stay with fully inspected local host families at various times during their education in the UK. We make sure that all household members or any visitors staying over at the same time if aged 16 or over have enhanced DBS check. These checks are renewed every three years. As well as ensuring full Safer Recruitment processes are carried out when appointing home stays, Era Education also carries out spot checks on home stay providers (see Era Education Safer Recruitment Policy). The primary carer within each host family setting receives appropriate Safeguarding training during their induction and updates as they become available, but at least annually.

## 7. Dealing with a disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone - as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Explain what must be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping & Appendix H)
- Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead **without delay**
- Check with the DSL after 24 hours about what action has been taken and follow up if concerned

When assessing the needs of a child staff should consider the following definitions:

**Child in need** - A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

**Child at risk** - Serious and immediate concern about a student who is at risk of serious harm

See Appendix I – What Era Education staff should do if worried about a Child in Need or Child at Risk.

See Appendix D – How to respond to a disclosure, for more support.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL.

If a Era Education staff member receives a disclosure about potential harm caused by another staff member, they should see section 12 – Allegations involving Staff/Volunteers.

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## 8. Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the DSL.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation. Use the record of concern sheet wherever possible – Appendix H
- Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, witness, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Indicate the position of any injuries if evident
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
- Agree and record actions and outcomes

All records need to be given to the DSL promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The DSL ensures that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education Regulations 2005.

All child protection recordings should be scrutinised regularly to ensure the action and outcome has been carried and any drift avoided. All records are kept on a confidential need to know basis and are stored in a locked location within a locked room at Era Education.

## 9. Confidentiality

Safeguarding and protecting children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers.

All Era Education staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services and the Police).

If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. This may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families during their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

## 10. Procedure

When a member of staff is concerned about a child he or she informs the DSL who then decides whether the concerns should be referred to Children's Services. If it is decided to make a request for involvement to Children's Services (using the Local Safeguarding

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Board's 'Thresholds for Assessment Services') this is discussed with the parents and other stakeholders, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

While it is the DSL's role to make request for involvement, any staff member can make a referral to Children's Services. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (e.g. concern that a family might have plans to carry out Female Genital Mutilation), a referral should be made to Children's Services and/or the Police immediately. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL must be informed as soon as possible.

See Appendix I What Era Education staff should do if worried about a Child in Need or Child at Risk.

Any person employed by Era Education who discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 or there is a risk this might occur the must report this to the police. This is a mandatory reporting duty. See Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2019): Annex A for further details. The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations. (See Appendix H).

## 11. Communication with Parents

We are fully committed to working in partnership with Parents. Era Education ensures the Safeguarding Policy is available publicly via our website and in hard copy if requested.

Parents should be informed prior to referral, unless it is considered to do so might place the child at increased risk of significant harm by:

- The behavioural response it prompts e.g. a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats / forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed;
- Leading to an unreasonable delay;
- Leading to the risk of loss of evidential material.

(The provision may also consider not informing parent(s) where it would place a member of staff at risk).

The Provision ensures that parents/carers understand the responsibilities placed on Era Education and staff for safeguarding children.

## 12. Allegations involving staff/volunteers

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact within their personal, professional or community life.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in Era Education safeguarding arrangements.

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Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place and easily accessed for such concerns to be raised with Era Education. (See Whistleblowing Policy)

If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the Director.

In the event of a staff member who feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, allegations should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). See Appendix G Useful Contacts. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the DSL if appropriate and make any referral via them. (See Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part Four, DfE 2019, for further information)

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised, and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present. This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the Director.

The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The Director does not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but assesses whether it is necessary to refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer:

If the allegation meets any of the three criteria set out at the start of this section, contact should always be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer without delay. See Appendix G Useful Contacts.

If it is decided that the allegation meets the threshold for safeguarding, this takes place in accordance with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures or the Board local to the place where the allegation occurred.

If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it is handed back to the employer for consideration via the company's internal procedures.

The Director should as soon as possible, (following briefing from the Local Authority Designated Officer) inform the subject of the allegation.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer through the whistleblowing procedure or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

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NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285, line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **13. Safer Working Practice**

To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff should be aware of safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the Staff Code of Conduct and Safer Recruitment Document Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (2015)

The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of managers towards children and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. This includes guidelines for staff on positive behaviour management in line with the ban on corporal punishment (School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

## **14. Safer Recruitment**

Era Education ensures that there are appropriate staff with safer recruitment training for interviews and that safer recruitment practices are followed always. We maintain a single central record to ensure all statutory requirements. All references are verified and recorded. See separate Safer Recruitment Policy.

## **15. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020**

The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2020 is available online: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/912592/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_Sep\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf)

It is essential that all staff have access to this online document and read Part 1 and Annex A, which provides further information on:

- Children missing from education
- Child sexual exploitation
- Honour based' violence
- FGM mandatory reporting duty
- Forced marriage
- Preventing radicalisation
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Peer on Peer abuse

This is to assist staff and volunteers to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in this guidance.

Our staff members and regular visitors are asked to sign to say they have read these sections and should subsequently be re-directed to these online documents again should any changes occur. This document is also made available for parents on our website.

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## 17 Covid 19

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has meant many organisations that work with children have had to change the way they operate on a day-to-day basis.

Schools, colleges and nurseries are beginning to welcome back children who they haven't seen in person for several months. Also guardians have starting to work with their dependants as they arrive to UK and communicate with the students in safest possible way.

Other agencies and organisations may still be reliant on [remote or distanced contact](#) and may be less able to recognise child protection concerns and provide appropriate support.

If it necessary to meet the child in person the guardian is obligated to take all protection measures as wear the mask and keep a distance.

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## Appendix A.

### Types of Abuse

**Physical abuse** is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. It isn't accidental - children who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, and slapped or having objects thrown at them. Shaking or hitting babies can cause non-accidental head injuries (NAHI). Sometimes parents or carers will make up or cause the symptoms of illness in their child, perhaps giving them medicine they don't need and making the child unwell – this is known as fabricated or induced illness (FI). There's no excuse for physically abusing a child. It causes serious, and often long-lasting, harm – and in severe cases, death.

**Neglect** is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is abuse. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents. A child who's neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage - even death.

**Sexual Abuse** A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse. They may not even understand that it's wrong.

**Emotional abuse** is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them. Children who are emotionally abused are often suffering another type of abuse or neglect at the same time – but this isn't always the case

### Specific abuse and vulnerability concerns.

#### Breast Ironing/Binding

Breast ironing (also known as breast flattening) is the pounding and massaging of a pubescent girl's breasts, using hard or heated objects, to try to make them stop developing or to disappear.

When a disclosure or signs of breast ironing are noted, staff should always alert the DSL immediately.

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## Child Exploitation, Sexual (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation

There will be other circumstances which give cause for serious concern about the welfare of children; such as Child Exploitation (CE).

The exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common; involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

The current definition updated March 2017 states:

*Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where 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.*

Child Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' to supply drugs. Further information on county lines can be found at

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines>

More details about Child Criminal Exploitation and the influence of urban gangs can be found below.

## County Lines, Cross Borders, Gangs, Trafficking and Cuckooing

These are police terms for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market/or coastal towns using dedicated mobile or 'deal lines'. Gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Often they take over the homes of vulnerable adults and children by force or coercion in a practice referred to cuckooing. Getting involved in gang culture can have serious and potentially devastating consequences, with dealers/offenders/members not afraid to use violence. Any activity that seems to be suspicious, or involve drug dealing/crime/exploitation should be passed to the police on 101. Should young people thought to be involved the early help assessment is a useful tool. A request for involvement to CSC/police is needed if the child is at immediate risk of harm.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

## Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse may take many forms. Witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent may cause considerable distress to children, and both the physical assaults and psychological abuse suffered by adult victims who experience domestic abuse can have a negative impact on their ability to look after their children. Children can still suffer the effects of domestic abuse, even if they do not witness the incidents directly. However, in up to 90% of incidents involving domestic violence where children reside in the home, the children are in the same or the next room. Children's exposure to parental conflict, even where violence is not present, can lead to serious anxiety and distress among children. Children can see school as a safe retreat from problems at home or alternatively not attend school through a perceived need to be at home to protect abused parents or siblings.

Domestic abuse can therefore have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being and development. The potential scale of the impact on children is not always easy to assess, but may manifest itself as behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, including poor self-esteem, withdrawal, absenteeism, adult-child conflict. Children sometimes disclose what is happening or may be reluctant to do so, hoping that someone will realise something is wrong.

## Extremism and Radicalisation

The UK Government defines extremism as: "The vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs" and/or "calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas." Radicalisation is defined by the UK Government within this context as: "The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups."

We take the "Prevent" duty seriously and recognise that Safeguarding against extremism and radicalisation is no different from Safeguarding against any other vulnerability; it is about protecting children and young people from being groomed and exploited by others. (See Prevent Policy)

## Fabricated or Induced Illness by Carer (FII)

FII is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of their carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

FII can cause significant harm to children. FII involves a well child being presented by a carer as ill or disabled, or an ill or disabled child being presented with a more significant problem than he or she has in reality and suffering harm as a consequence.

There are three main ways of the parent/carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child:

- Fabrication of signs and symptoms, including fabrication of past medical history.
- Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts,

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- records, letters and documents, and specimens of bodily fluids.
- Induction of illness by a variety of means.

The possibility of fabricated and induced illness should be considered where there are discrepancies between professional and parental perceptions of the child's needs or of any illness or disability and where there is a possibility of significant harm to the child.

## Faith Abuse

Faith abuse is linked to a belief in witchcraft or possession by spirits and demons. In such instances, physical and/or psychological violence may be used in order to "get rid" of the possessing spirit.

Child abuse is never acceptable in any community, in any culture, in any religion, under any circumstances. This includes abuse that might arise through a belief in spirit possession or other spiritual or religious beliefs.

Faith abuse usually occurs in the household where the child lives. It may also occur in a place of worship where alleged "diagnosis" and "exorcism" may take place.

When a disclosure or signs of faith abuse are noted, staff should always alert the DSL immediately. In such situations, the DSL will always call Oxfordshire Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team on 0800833408 or the team in their locality.

## Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (World Health Organisation). It is also sometimes referred to as female genital cutting or female circumcision. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM is not an issue that can be decided on by personal preference – it is an illegal, extremely harmful practice, and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. Professionals have a statutory duty to report all cases of FGM to the Police where disclosure or signs of FGM are noted or where a person knows or suspects FGM has been – or will be – perpetrated. When someone reports FGM to the Police, they should ask for a crime reference number.

If there is an IMMEDIATE RISK, call the Police on 999 (emergency number).

If there is NOT an immediate risk, call the Police on 101 (non-emergency number).

## Forced Marriage

The UK Government describes this as taking someone, usually overseas, to force them to marry (whether or not the FM takes place), or marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not). Breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order is also a criminal offence.

When a disclosure or signs of FM are noted, staff should always alert the DSL immediately. Era Education should never attempt to intervene directly. In such situations, the DSL will always call either Oxford Direct/Police or other local

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organisation and/or the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151.

## Grooming

Is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse.

## Hate Crime

A hate Incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender. If you, or anyone you know, has been called names, been bullied or had anything happen to them that you think may be because of one of these factors, then you should report this as a hate incident. Not all hate incidents will amount to criminal offences, but those that do become hate crimes.

## Historical Abuse

Historical abuse (also known as non-recent abuse) is an allegation of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse made by or on behalf of someone who is now 18 years or over, relating to an incident which took place when the alleged victim was under 18 years old.

The Police should be informed about allegations of crime at the earliest opportunity through the DSL.

## Honour-Based Violence (HBV)

So-called 'honour based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities,

need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

## Missing Children

A young person is to be considered "missing" if he/she is absent from his/her place of residence without authority to a degree or in circumstances where the absence causes concern for safety of the child or a danger to the public". This includes children and young people who have been forced to leave home and those whose whereabouts are unknown and those who feel they have had to leave home (rather than making a positive choice to do so).

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High risks concerns include where:

1. The responsible adult has no indication when the child is likely to return
2. The child develops a pattern of going missing repeatedly
3. The child's location is unknown, or reason for absence is unknown there is cause for concern for the child because of their vulnerability
4. The child is at high risk of CSE/gangs
5. The child is pregnant or has a young child
6. The child has a history of suicidal thoughts or behaviors
7. The child is at risk of radicalisation (See Missing Student Policy)

## **Online Abuse**

This type of abuse happens on the web, through social networks, playing online games or using a mobile phone. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people. (See Cyberbullying & E-Safety Guidelines)

## **Peer on peer abuse including Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Sexual violence and Harassment in education (2017)**

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to children's services and the police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting.

When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider: Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development)

between the young people concerned; or whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or where there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways and different gender issues can be prevalent. Severe harm may be caused to children by abusive and bullying behaviour of other children, which may be physical, sexual or emotional and can include gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting, teenage relationship abuse, peer-on- peer exploitation, serious youth violence, sexual bullying or harmful sexual behaviour.

Guidance on responding to and managing sexting incidents can be found at:

<https://ceop.police.uk>

Staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers and this should not be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up".

To minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse Era Education will:

Have systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued and have relevant policies in place (see Anti- Bullying and

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Cyberbullying Policy).

## Private Fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (18 if they are disabled) lives with someone who is not a close relative, guardian or person with parental responsibility for 28 days or more. Private fostering is not the same as fostering arranged by the local authority.

Children and young people become privately fostered for a variety of reasons

- Their parents live overseas and they come to this country to attend school
- Their parents are ill and cannot look after them
- Their parents work away from home, possibly abroad
- Their parents have come to the UK to study or work and require someone to look after their children
- They are teenagers who are estranged from their families

The Children Act 1989, and section 44 of the Children Act 2004, outlines the legal duty of the local authority to make sure that the welfare of all privately fostered children is safeguarded and promoted. As stated in law Era Education will inform the Local Authority about all private fostering arrangements if they were to happen.

## Sexting

Sexting is sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs or images, primarily between mobile phones. It may also include the use of a computer or any digital device. If this were to happen, Era Education will follow

local procedures with police and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board or the Board nearest to the place of the incident. (See Online Safety and Sexting Policy)

## Appendix B

### Managing Allegations and Escalation

The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)' states that governing bodies and proprietors should appoint a member of staff of the school's or college's leadership team to the role of designated safeguarding lead. (Hence within Era Education the Director is the DSL.) All staff should be instructed that any allegation should be reported immediately to the DSL. Written safeguarding procedures should reflect this guidance.

On being advised of an allegation which meets the criteria, DSL should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day.

Phone Oxford Direct on **01865815956** for a referral if the alleged incident has taken place within Oxford.

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The LADO's role is to provide advice and guidance to organisations dealing with allegations, to liaise with the police and other agencies, and to monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

All allegations against staff are dealt with in accordance with 'Working Together 2015'. In addition, schools should have regard to Part 4 of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)'. Should the allegation be about the DSL, allegations should be passed directly to the LADO.

## Appendix C

### Referral Routes

#### Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board

The OSCB has a statutory duty to co-ordinate how agencies work together to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people in Oxfordshire and to ensure the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements.

#### Report a child at risk

If you are worried about a child or young person who could be in danger, please contact

- Children's Social Care on 01865815843
- by email at [childrens@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:childrens@oxford.gov.uk)
- or the police

You can contact the police directly by dialling 101 and they will discuss with Children's Social Care what action should be taken. **In an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999.**

If you would like to speak to a social worker outside of office hours, please phone the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0300 123 23 27.

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## Appendix D

### How to Respond to a Disclosure

#### **Receive**

Listen

Accept what the student says

Take it at their pace

Try not to burden them with guilt by asking questions like, "Why didn't you tell me before?"

#### **Reassure**

Stay calm and reassure the student that they have done the right thing in talking to you

Don't promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a student who is at risk Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the student displays

Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the student to tell you what happened

Empathise with the student - don't tell them what they should be feeling

#### **React**

React to the student only to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter Do not ask leading questions ask open questions like "Anything else to tell me?" or "And?"

Do not criticise the perpetrator

Do not ask the student to repeat everything to another member of staff Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk

Inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately

#### **Record**

Make some very brief notes, at the time, write them up as soon as possible onto the confidential cause for concern form

Do not destroy your original notes

Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child

If appropriate. draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising Be objective in your recording: not your interpretations or assumptions

#### **Support**

Make sure that you continue to support the student

Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the student to colleagues.

#### **DO**

Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a student may be at risk of

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harm.

Explain sensitively to the person that you have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person.

Try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of College staff.

Clarify the information using actual words where possible. Sign and date the record. Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?'

Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise.

Don't express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the student.

Reassure and support the student as far as possible.

Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told.

Explain to the student what will happen next and that they will be involved as appropriate.

Make sure the student is safe and supported.

Complete the Confidential Cause for Concern Form (see Appendix H) and return it to the DSL as soon as possible.

## **DO NOT**

Promise confidentiality

Judge or criticise the alleged perpetrator or the student. Ask leading questions.

Interrogate or try to establish if the student is telling the truth.

Attempt to investigate the circumstances.

Put words in to the student's mouth.

Trivialise any aspect of a disclosure.

Let any allegations, suspicions or concerns go unreported.

**Remember - Safeguarding is everybody's business**

## **Appendix E**

### **Prevent & Radicalisation**

**Radicalisation and Extremism** is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. "Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas" (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011). Prevent is one part of the United Kingdom's counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) and aims to stop people from being exposed to extreme ideologies and becoming radicalised. The CONTEST strategy is divided up into four priority objectives:

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- Pursue – stop terrorist attacks
- Prepare – where we cannot stop an attack, mitigate its impact
- Protect – strengthen overall protection against terrorist attacks
- Prevent – stop people becoming terrorists and supporting violent extremism

It is an approach that involves many agencies and communities to safeguard people who may be at risk of radicalisation. Since the publication of the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been attempts to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to develop extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Keeping children safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children from other risks. Children should be protected from messages of all violent extremism. Era Oxford company's prevent lead is Vitalija Abare, her contact number 07557532717

To report concerns in Oxford, contact the Regional Police Prevent Team:

- Phone: 03450507666
- Or [www.go.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.go.uk/report-terrorism)
- Revised Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales\_  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

(See separate Anti-Radicalisation / Prevent Duty Policy)

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## Appendix F

### Restraint

What is reasonable force?

1. It is never acceptable to use corporal punishment
2. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact.
3. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
4. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. For

further clarification click on the link below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/44405/1/Use\\_of\\_reasonable\\_force\\_advice\\_Reviewed\\_July\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/44405/1/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf)

## Appendix G

### Useful Contacts

#### Era Education contact person's details

DSL: Vitalija Abare

Mobile: +44 (0) 7557532717

E-mail: info@eraeducation.co.uk

#### Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Children &

##### Young People's Team

County Hall New Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX11ND

01865309196

Oxfordshire MASH local coordinator – Pauline Morris -

03450507666

Consultation Line for **Children's Safeguarding Leads**: 0300 123 3078

**Early Help Advice Hub**: 03452412705

Lcss.central@oxfordshire.gov.uk

**Emergency Duty Team**: 03450507666

**LADO**: Mrs Alison Beasley Tel:

01865815956

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**Children's Commissioner England:** +44 (0) 20 7783 8330

**Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** Telephone Advice Line  
Oxfordshire 01865902515

**LGBT - [stonewall.org.uk](http://stonewall.org.uk)**

Oxfordshire Drug and Alcohol Service 01865336800 Oxfordshire  
Integrated Domestic Abuse Service 08007310055  
Oxfordshire Partnership Integrated Therapy Service 01865316317

**Oxfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board** has full procedures on their website at  
[www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk)

If you are concerned about the safety of a child/children contact Oxfordshire  
Children's Services **emergency duty team** on 0800833408 or Multi-Agency  
Safeguarding Hub: 03450507666

## **OCSB**

Telephone – 01865815843

E-mail [ocsb@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ocsb@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Prevent Team contacts**

- Anti-Terrorist Hotline Tel:0800 789 321
- You can also contact your local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number). They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice.
- Department of Education Counter Extremism helpline Tel: 020 7340 7264 to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. Concerns can also be raised by email [counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

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## **Thames Valles Police**

To contact the police by phone, 24 hours a day dial 101. If life is in danger or a crime is in progress dial 999.

**Reporting FGM to Police:** Since October 2015, it has been a legal obligation for all staff to report suspected cases of FGM to the police. Thames Valles Police have trained, specialist officers who can be contacted by calling 101.

**NSPCC Cardiff:** 08088005000

**Children's Commissioner :** 02077838330

Era Education will work closely with and provide contacts for LSCBs in all regions where it operates

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## Appendix H

### Cause for Concern Reporting Form

Logging a concern about a young person's safety or welfare

Part 1 (for use by any Era Education staff)

<b>Young person's name:</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Date &amp; time of incident:</b>	<b>Date &amp; time of writing:</b>
<b>Name .....</b> (print)  <b>Signature.....</b>  <b>Job title.....</b>	
<b>Record the following factually: What are you worried about? Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a young person use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses?</b>	
<b>What is the young person's account/perspective?</b>	
<b>Professional opinion where relevant</b>	
<b>Any other relevant information (distinguish between fact and opinion). Previous concerns etc.</b>	
<b>What needs to happen? Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when</b>	

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.  
Please pass this form to your Designated Safeguarding Lead  
(Vitalija Abare)

*Time & date passed to DSL .....*

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## Part 2 (for use by DSL)

<b><u>Time and date</u> information received, and <u>from whom</u>:</b>	
<b>Any <u>advice sought</u> – if required (date, time, name, role, organisation and advice given):</b>	
<b><u>Action taken</u> (referral to children’s social care/monitoring advice given to appropriate staff/CAF etc.) with reasons:</b>  <b>Note time, date, names, who information shared with and when etc:</b>	
<b><u>Parent’s</u> <u>informed?</u> Y/N and reasons:</b>	
<b><u>Outcome</u> Record names of individuals/agencie s who have given information regarding outcome of any referral (if made):</b>	
<b>Where can <u>additional</u> <u>information</u> regarding child/incident be found (e.g. pupil file?):</b>	

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<b>Should a <u>concern/</u> <u>confidential file</u> be commenced if there is not already one? Why?</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Printed Name:</b>	