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# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## 50-50 SYNC CIC Specialist Education Provider

**Policy Date:** September 2022  
**Date Ratified by Governors:** September 2022  
**Next Review:** July 2023

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## Aims:

This Safeguarding Policy is based on guidance issued by the Secretary of State, including Working together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department for Education (DfE), September 2022. This policy was last updated in September 2022 by Rod Douglas Proprietor and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

This policy includes our provisions procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff. This policy should be considered in conjunction with our anti-bullying, equalities, team-teach intervention, online safety, whistleblowing, attendance, healthy schools, first aid & medication, health & safety including risk assessments.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

[The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children

[Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools’ duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

[The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)

[The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it’s proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there’s evidence that they’re being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

[The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the “2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations”) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

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## 1. Contacts

<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead at the provision</b>	<b>Rod Douglas – Proprietor</b> <a href="mailto:rod@5050sync.com">rod@5050sync.com</a> 0333 500 50 50
<b>Additional Designated Safeguarding Leads</b>	<b>David La Chana: Managing Director</b> <a href="mailto:david@5050sync.com">david@5050sync.com</a>  <b>Michael Snowdon: Managing Director</b> <a href="mailto:michael@5050sync.com">michael@5050sync.com</a>
<b>Designated Safeguarding Governor</b>	

<b>Slough Borough Council LADO</b>	<b>Harvinder Rajansani   Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</b>  Slough Children First   01753 474053   07927 681858   LADO@scstrust.co.uk   All sensitive information should be sent through Egress
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## 2. Context

50-50 SYNC CIC providers understands that our work in safeguarding and protecting children must always have regard for the national guidance issued by the Secretary of State and should be in line with local guidance and procedures. This policy is therefore written with due regard to national guidance, the latest of which is Keeping Children Safe in Education (September, 2022) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Our provisions procedures for safeguarding children are also compliant with the Slough Borough Council’s Child Protection Procedures.

This policy is available to everybody, in hard copy from our provisions website: [www.5050SYNC.com](http://www.5050SYNC.com).

All staff at 50-50 SYNC CIC know that a range of other policies are central to many aspects of the provisions child protection & safeguarding policy, and this document should therefore be read in conjunction with our policies for:

- Anti-Bullying

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- Attendance
- Online safety
- Equalities
- First Aid & Administration of Medication
- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Team Teach Intervention
- Whistleblowing

All adults working with, or on behalf of, our organisation must always follow all of our procedures. Our policy is regularly reviewed and updated by the designated safeguarding lead and updates are disseminated to all staff via emails and safeguarding briefings and updates, which are provided on most of staff training days. All staff have received training on the new KCSIE 2022 during the staff training days at the beginning of the 2022 Academic year. Staff starting midway through the year receive safeguarding training as part of their induction.

## Appendices

Appendix 1. Record of Concern Form

Appendix 2. What to do if you are Worried About a Child Being Abused. Appendix

3. Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

## Definitions

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is 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. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

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**Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes** (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- ›The local authority (LA)
- ›A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- ›The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

**Victim** is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

**Alleged perpetrator(s)** and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what’s appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

#### Equality statement

We recognize in a specialist educational setting such as 50-50 SYNC CIC that many of our young people and their families have an increased need for additional support, increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children’s diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- ›Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- ›Are young carers
- ›May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- ›Have English as an additional language
- ›Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- ›Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- ›Are asylum seekers

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- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member’s mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

### 3. Key Points

All staff must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all children and must know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise.

At 50-50 SYNC CIC we will ensure that all staff know that Rod Douglas, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and has overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. Though some of the duties inherent to this role can and will be delegated to the additional other DSLs in order that work is completed most efficiently, the ultimate responsibility remains with the DSL. In the absence of the DSL, Managing Directors will assume that responsibility. DSLs are identified on the front cover of this policy, and will undertake the DSLs duties. All safeguarding leads have received advanced level training in order to undertake their roles and will be safer recruitment trained. All safeguarding leads receive updated training at least every two years; and in addition, keep up-to-date with safeguarding developments at least annually as well as receiving weekly updates through the NSPCC CASPAR webpage.

### 4. Safeguarding Systems

All staff must also have read, and signed to acknowledge their understanding of, Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022 Part A. At 50-50 SYNC CIC, we ensure that a range of robust and rigorous mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and carry out their roles and responsibilities as set out in part one of this policy. Full safeguarding training, drawing upon the latest national and local guidance, is provided to all staff on an annual basis. Regular safeguarding updates are provided throughout the year to ensure that staff have the most up to date relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The training programme focuses on topics such as the ‘Prevent’ duty, equality, online safety, child criminal exploitation and sexual violence and sexual harassment. Staff who are employed during the school year will receive safeguarding training at the very beginning of their induction period, and at least annually thereafter.

Staff will sign agreeing that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities, and have read and understood all relevant safeguarding guidance, policies and procedures and agree to implement them.

Systems are in place to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of the safeguarding & child protection policy and procedures in place, and that these are applied consistently, including:

- safeguarding induction
- all staff annual safeguarding training

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- online safeguarding training
- daily/weekly safeguarding through reflection sessions
- safeguarding emails to staff regarding key issues, updates and individual early help plans
- safeguarding refresher workshops, which are held on the vast majority of training days
- Half-termly safeguarding meetings between all the safeguarding leads.
- Contact with the proprietor regarding any Safeguarding concern/issue.

**The child protection register is maintained by the DSL** and all staff working with pupils are informed of all matters relating to children in the provision. In addition to our child protection register, **the DSL keeps a live safeguarding log which records any and all concerns raised, and the actions taken.**

**The DSL provides regular feedback to the governing body on all safeguarding issues.** This is through termly verbal/written updates and attendance and input at all meetings of the governing body.

**Regular contact is maintained with the proprietor, Rod Douglas. The all managing directors have undertaken all the required safeguarding training, including on ‘Prevent’ duty and Channel.**

**50-50 SYNC CIC will always follow safer recruitment procedures so that we can be confident that all adults working in our provision are safe to do so. All managing directors and the proprietor are Safer Recruitment trained. All interviews are undertaken by the managing directors.**

Supervision through our psychotherapist is made available to those staff who are involved in the management of allegations of child abuse.

**All persons who carry out regulated activity with children have an Enhanced DBS check prior to working at the school.** An individual may commence work with a DBS check that is pending as long as the provision receives two satisfactory references and a cleared barred list check, the individual will also always be supervised when working with pupils at all times.

The DSL and managing directors will, if informed in advance by the staff member undergoing the DBS check, risk assess the member of staff if the check includes a record of anything that could potentially be cause for concern including any police caution, conviction, reprimand or warning. Whether this risk assessment supports the appointment of the staff member or not, this risk assessment with any supporting investigative documentation will be kept securely and confidentially on file. If a member of staff does not declare anything that could potentially be cause for concern, including any relevant police caution, conviction, reprimand or warning, the applicant will not be appointed to the provision.

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential and **the purpose of all intervention is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.** For those staff who engage with children who experience discrimination in their daily lives or who are from cultures different to those of the professionals, assumption and stereotyping must not be part of our practice. Every effort must be made to ensure that cultural issues are understood and that each individual case is dealt with on its own merits. Staff and those working in the provision have daily contact with children in their classes and around the building, and as a result have first-hand knowledge of child development and behavioural norms. This places the professionals in a unique position to identify children who would benefit from ‘early help’ and

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who are/ or are at risk of abuse. **However, staff and support workers do not decide if something is or is not a child protection issue. Any concerns MUST be passed onto the designated safeguarding lead and/or a managing director and referred using the concern recording form (or directly to the LADO, local authority or Channel, if appropriate).**

**Staff must follow 50-50 SYNC CICs’ safeguarding and child protection procedure if they have any concern regarding a child.** However, staff should also be aware that **if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral can and should be made to children’s social care immediately** and that **anybody can make a referral**. If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration.

**Any visitors to the provision will be accompanied at all times by a member of staff**, including social workers, and inspectors to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. We have a clear vetting procedure, including risk assessment to ensure that any **visiting speaker is suitable and appropriate**. The managing directors will be aware of any arrangements and will have a clear understanding as to why they will be coming in to speak. Key staff will always try to select visiting speakers from an established organisation, and appropriate checks should be undertaken to establish the suitability of the person, such as internet searches and/or contacting other provisions/schools where the person has spoken previously.

All visitors will read key safeguarding information on arrival, while being required to bring appropriate identification. Although viewing DBS certificates may be appropriate, most visiting speakers will not be in ‘regulated activity’ and so will not necessarily have a DBS certificate to present. Visitors must be **supervised at all times** and not left alone with pupils. Visiting speakers should understand that their presentation will be brought to an early end, if the content proves unsuitable. All information about the visiting speaker and the booking process is recorded on a **Visitor or Event On Site** proforma. After the presentation, feedback from staff should be gathered to note any contentious subject areas or comments, and state whether the speaker could be booked again in the future. Once a person has visited a provision/school, future checks should be proportionate.

## Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone’s** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and management in the provision and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The provision plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- ›Behaviour policy
- ›Pastoral support system
- ›Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
  - Healthy and respectful relationships
  - Boundaries and consent
  - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - Body confidence and self-esteem
  - How to recognise an abusive relationship



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- (including coercive and controlling behaviour) ○ The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they’re always unacceptable

## All staff

Staff who work directly with children are expected to read at least part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and are also expected to read Annex B of KCSIE about specific safeguarding issues.

All staff will:

Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education’s statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually

Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance

Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they’ll be interacting with online)

Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and additional DSLs, the behaviour and mood management policy and Online safety policy as well as the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

The early help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment

The process for making referrals to local authority children’s social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play

What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals

The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from

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or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)

The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at provisions/schools and online

The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children

What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

## **The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

The DSL is a member of the management team. Our DSL is Rod Douglas- proprietor of 50-50 SYNC CIC specialist education provider. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the provision.

During term time, the DSL will be available throughout the day to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of hours the DSL and additional DSLs can be contacted using the [safeguarding@5050sync.com](mailto:safeguarding@5050sync.com) email address.

When the DSL is absent, the additional DSLs as named on the front of this policy – will act as cover.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children’s social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour

The DSL will also:

Keep the management team informed of any issues

› Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate

› Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children’s social care colleagues to prepare the school’s policies

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- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an ‘appropriate adult’ to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in their job description.

## The governing board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school’s local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Make sure:
  - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
  - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
  - The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns
  - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
  - That this policy reflects the needs of Hopewell children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
  - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed

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- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate

The chair of governors will act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

## The proprietor and designated managing directors

The proprietor is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

› Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:

- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect

› Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the provision and via the business website

› Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent

› Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly

› Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)

› Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about children given to us by the children themselves, their parent/carers or by other agencies will remain confidential. Staff will be given relevant information only on a “need to know” basis in order to support the child if that is necessary and appropriate. We are, however, under a duty to share any information which is of a child protection nature. We understand that this is in the best interests of the child and overrides any other duties we have regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

We have a duty to keep any records which relate to child protection work undertaken by us or our partner agencies and to ensure that these are kept apart from the main child record, stored securely and only accessible to key members of staff.

We also have a duty to send copies of these records to any school to which the child transfers.

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At 50-50 SYNC CIC we recognize that:

- › Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- › Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
- › The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- › If staff need to share ‘special category personal data’, the DPA 2018 contains ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- › Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child’s best interests
- › If a victim asks the staff at the provision not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment: There’s no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn’t consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there’s another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies

The DSL will have to balance the victim’s wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children

The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
  - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children’s social care
  - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- › Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
  - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
  - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims’ identities

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- The government’s [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 ‘golden rules’ for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

### *RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN*

All children at 50-50 SYNC CIC must be able to place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the provision. They must feel sure that they can speak about any worries or concerns they may have and that they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately. All staff must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to talk to them about any matter which raises child protection concerns.

All staff must:

- **Listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions**
- Respect the child’s right to privacy but **not promise confidentiality**
- [Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in sharing](#)
- **Explain** to the child that in order to keep him/her safe from harm the information that has been shared **must be passed on**
- **Report** what has been disclosed to the DSL as soon as possible, or in their absence, one of the DDSLs
- **Record**, as soon as is practicable, but within 24 hours what was said using the **child’s actual words** on the **schools’ Cause for concern forms**.
- **Remember** that if there is a **risk of immediate serious harm to a child** a referral can and should be made to children’s social care immediately and that **anybody can make a referral**. If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration.

The DSL will:

- Manage referrals from staff or any others from outside the provision
- Work closely with external agencies, including a pupil’s wider professional network, which usually include professionals from social care services and CAMHS
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with staff
- Undertake training and keep staff abreast of latest legislation and guidance
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents/carers
- Ensure that child protection information is transferred to a pupil’s new provision/school
- Be aware of pupils who have a social worker and check whether the child is currently subject to a Child Protection Plan or has been previously subject to a Plan
- Assess any urgent medical needs of the child

50-50 SYNC CIC

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- Consider whether a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm
- Consider whether a safeguarding concern should be discussed with the child’s family or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm because of delay or the family’s possible actions or reactions
- Seek advice if unsure that a child protection referral should be made
- Will liaise with the safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ July 2018 and NPCC – ‘when to call the police’.

If the child discloses sexual abuse or sexual abuse is suspected, the child must not be questioned and the parents must not be informed until social care services and the police child abuse investigation team has been informed and advice given.

**Information will be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis and must be treated in absolute confidence. Staff must not discuss allegations with the child, family members or colleagues.**

The DSL will either make a referral to the child’s local authority children’s services duty or referral and assessment team or, if a referral is not considered appropriate at that stage, make full written records of the information that they have received, detailing the reasons for the judgement that the matter was not referred to the local authority.

The DSL keeps a written record of all contact with other agencies. **All paperwork relating to child abuse is kept securely.**

All children who are subject to a child protection plan will have core group meetings and case conferences organised by social care services. A member of the safeguarding leadership team (DSL or one of the DDSLs) will attend these on behalf of the provision. Children are aware that these meetings take place and that the school will be presenting a report at the meetings. The proprietor and/or managing directors will act as the provisions ‘designated staff member’ and are responsible for Children Looked After (CLA), they will liaise accordingly with Virtual School headteachers. They will provide update information that will be collated for the pupils records e.g. their Pupil Education Plan (PEP).

**All staff, including managing directors will monitor children who are subject to a social care services Child Protection (CP) or Child In Need (CIN) Plan.**

### *CHILD PROTECTION – RECOGNITION AND RESPONSE TO ABUSE*

Owing to the nature of the day-to-day relationship children at our provision have with staff, all adults working in the school are particularly well placed to notice any physical, emotional or behavioural signs that a child may be suffering significant harm. We understand that harm means the ill treatment or impairment of a child’s health and/or development, including that caused as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person.

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All staff must therefore be alert to any possible indicators that a child is suffering harm and report any concerns to the DSL.

All adults working in the provision will receive at least annual whole-school child protection training in order that their awareness to the possibility of a child suffering remains high.

### *SAFEGUARDING – PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT*

All families of children attending 50-50 SYNC CIC’s provision must feel secure in the knowledge that they are entrusting their children to adults who will strive to keep them safe at the provision.

We will do this by:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the provision
- Ensuring that our staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection according to their role and responsibilities and keep an up to date record of all training undertaken
- Encouraging the self-esteem and self-assertiveness of all children through the curriculum offering so that the children themselves become aware of danger and risk and what is acceptable behaviour and what is not
- Ensuring children are taught about keeping themselves safe, including online safety as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) education and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE).
- Working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- Displaying appropriate posters that detail contact numbers for child protection help-lines (ChildLine)
- Always following Safer Recruitment procedures when appointing staff
- Welcoming visitors in a safe and secure manner (all visitors must sign in, read key safeguarding information and wear a visitor’s badge)
- Undertaking risk assessments when planning off-site activities or trips
- **Parents and carers are also able to make direct referrals to the local authority children’s service duty team if they have a concern about a child or the local authority designated officer (LADO) if they have a concern about a member of staff working at 50-50 SYNC CIC.**

## **5. SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES**



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### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES**

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential and **the purpose of all intervention is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.** We are aware that our pupils, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disability are more vulnerable to be subject to abuse and neglect. For example, there could be a reluctance to believe children with special educational needs and/or disability are being abused, limited opportunities for these children to seek help from someone else or a lack of access to support services. Staff have an awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability. Our pupils may have a higher risk of being isolated from their peers, left out of group activities or bullied. As a provision working with said pupils, we strive to help safeguard these pupils by ensuring that they are heard. We may liaise with external support services on the family's behalf.

### **CONTEXUALISING SAFEGUARDING**

Staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours may be a result of factors outside of the provision and/or can occur between children outside of the provision. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur and establish whether these wider environmental factors are putting the pupil at risk of harm.

### **MENTAL HEALTH**

50-50 SYNC CIC provision works very closely with local specialist providers and the LA to support individual pupils in order to be able to develop their emotional well-being, self-esteem and development through aspects of our curriculum. Staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered or suffering from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but may notice behaviours that may be of a concern. The DSL will be informed as quickly as possible and the concern will be logged on a Record of Concern form. The DSL will discuss the concern the referring school or LA and will make a referral to social care services and CAMHS, as appropriate.

### **ATTENDANCE & CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME)**

**We know that a child's unexplained absence from school could mean that they are at risk of harm and that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. With this in mind we recognise the information set out in “Working Together to Improve School attendance” – May 2022 as well as our Attendance policy- In addition:**

- Our programmes are designed for pupils requiring 1:1 or 2:1 support and thus attendance is easy to track closely. Any child going missing from education will always get immediate attention from the DSL. Staff are trained to be alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage
- We will always seek to clarify the reason for a child's absence from our provision to their school or directly to the LA with the child's parent or carer as soon as is practicable on the first day. The reason for their absence will be recorded on the daily register. If we are unable to obtain the reason for a pupil being absent, we will attempt to contact the pupil's emergency contacts. We ask for at least two emergency contacts for every pupil. At this stage, if we have been unable to contact the family or emergency contacts, a home visit will be

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carried out. As a last resort, if the school has not been able to ascertain where a pupil is after following the steps above, the pupil will be classed as a ‘missing child’ and they will be reported to the police.

- We will also always report an unexplained absence of a child with a Child Protection Plan to the child’s social worker within one day
- We will always report a continued absence (10 or more school days) about which we have not been notified by the parent or carer to the Local Authority’s SEN Team and Education Welfare Service
- We will always report to the referring school and/or local authority the name of any child who has been newly registered to attend our provision but does not arrive on the expected day we will always report to the Education Welfare Service the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to school on the expected return date
- Maintain accurate attendance, in line with statutory requirements. This includes paying careful attention to off-rolling pupils in association with the LA knowing, and recording, pupil destinations consistently on the admissions register. Where a pupil destination is unknown, and unable to be sought after significant follow-up, the LA, education welfare service and/or social care services will be informed
- We do not ‘delete’ pupils from our records. We alert the child’s referring school or LA immediately if:
  - the pupil has been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
    - the pupil has ceased to attend school
    - the pupil has been certified as medically unfit to attend school
    - the pupil is in custody.

Keeping LA’s up to date is crucial so that they can check if children of compulsory school age are missing education, and therefore might be in danger of not receiving an education and be at risk of abuse or neglect.

We try not to exclude but when we have to exclude pupils for a fixed-term (usually a day), we put this in writing to both the family and the placing local authority. While we provide the pupil with work to complete during their external exclusion (and mark it), we are not responsible for the pupil’s safety and welfare during their time at home.

#### FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs”.

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting’, ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

**Any member of staff** who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or

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- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and any members off the management team or staff will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

**Any other member of staff** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Concerns about a child

**(as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)**

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child’s welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the management team and/or take advice from local authority children’s social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children’s social care directly, if appropriate share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

*Early help assessment*

If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the DDSL’s/management team will consider a referral to local authority children’s social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

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## Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children’s social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child’s situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child’s situation improves.

## **EXTREMISM & RADICALISATION (THE PREVENT DUTY AND CHANNEL)**

Since 2010 when the Government published **The Prevent Strategy** there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from extremism. There have been several occasions, both locally and nationally, in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold 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.

At 50-50 SYNC CIC we value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Both children and members of staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. 50-50 SYNC CIC provision **is clear that exploitation and radicalisation is viewed as a safeguarding concern and must be dealt with accordingly. ALL staff** at 50-50 SYNC CIC, must complete **Prevent and Channel training** as part of their induction and will receive regular briefings and update training.

## **FORCED MARRIAGE & HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE**

A ‘forced’ marriage is distinct from a consensual ‘arranged’ marriage because it is without the valid consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. A child who is forced into marriage is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Information about a forced marriage may come from the child themselves, of the child’s peer group, a relative or member of the child’s local community or from another professional. Forced marriage may also become apparent when other family issues are addressed, e.g. domestic violence, self-harm, child abuse or

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neglect. Forced marriage may involve the child being taken out of the country for the ceremony, is likely to involve non-consensual/under-age sex and refusal to go through with a forced marriage has sometimes been linked to ‘honour killing’. Honour-based violence is an ancient cultural tradition that encourages violence towards family members who are considered to have dishonoured their family. It is rooted in domestic violence and is often a conspiracy of family members and associates, meaning victims are a risk for their parents and families.

**School staff should respond to suspicions of a forced marriage or honour-based violence by alerting the DSL who will make a referral to Children’s Social Care and if the risk is acute, to the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team.** 50-50 SYNC staff should not treat any allegations of forced marriage or honour-based violence as a domestic issue and send the child back to the family home. It is not unusual for families to deny that forced marriage is intended, and once aware of professional concern, they may move the child and bring forward both travel arrangements and the marriage. For this reason, staff should not approach the family or family friends, or attempt to mediate between the child and family, as this will alert them to agency involvement.

Further information and advice can be obtained from the Forced Marriage Unit [www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage](http://www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage) or 020 70080151 and the Honour Based Violence Helpline 0800 599 9247. **Again, as with all concerns, please alert the DSL as soon as possible.**

### **BULLYING (ALL FORMS INCLUDING CYBER BULLYING)**

We understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, is harmful to children. We have an **anti-bullying policy** that sets out our aim of ensuring no child becomes a victim of any form of bullying and the work that we carry out in our provision to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is known to be unacceptable. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

We understand that bullying may take different forms and may include, as examples, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and biphobic behaviours. **All staff are clear about the Protected Characteristics, as prescribed in the Equality Act 2010 (see our equality policy).** Any such reported or observed incident will be dealt with in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

### **PUPILS WHO ARE LGBTQ+**

Pupils who are LGBTQ+ does not mean that they are at any greater risk of harm, but it could result in them being targeted by other young people. It is therefore essential that staff recognise this so that pupils can develop trusted relationships with them. Where they can talk and raise concerns if necessary within a safe space and environment.

### **ONLINE SAFETY**

We recognise that children’s use of the internet is an important part of their education but that there are risks of harm associated with its use. We have an **E- safety policy** that addresses how we seek to minimise those risks in our provision and teach children how to stay safe when using the internet in their lives and within the wider community. We also recognise that all members of staff must always be mindful of the need to follow our policy of acceptable use of our IT equipment.

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New technologies have become integral to the lives of children and young people in today’s society, both within education and in their lives outside of education. The requirement to ensure that children and young people are able to use the internet and related communications technologies appropriately and safely is addressed as part of our wider duty of care to which all who work in schools and provisions supporting schools and LA’s are bound.

The use of these exciting and innovative tools in school and at home has been shown to raise educational standards and promote achievement. Unfortunately, the use of these new technologies can put pupils at risk within and outside the school; pupils are not allowed to have any mobile or electronic device on them during the school day, this also includes “smart watches” this helps to safeguard pupils and ensure they are not accessing any inappropriate material on their personal devices. We also have a pro-active monitoring regime which allows us to monitor all internet use.

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

**Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism

**Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes

**Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and seminudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

*Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams*

While filters should not over block, as it may place unreasonable restrictions on what pupils can be taught, it is also fundamental to be aware of some of the potential dangers that the internet can pose, including:

- Access to illegal, harmful or inappropriate images, video games or other content
- Unauthorised access to/loss of/sharing of personal information
- The risk of being subject to grooming
- The sharing/distribution of personal images without an individual’s consent or knowledge
- Inappropriate communication/contact with others, including strangers
- Sexting
- Implications of geolocation
- Cyber-bullying
- An inability to evaluate the quality, accuracy and relevance of information on the internet
- The potential for excessive use which may have a negative impact on the social and emotional development and learning of the young person.

Material published by children and staff in a social context which is considered to bring the provisions reputation into disrepute or considered harmful to, or harassment of, another child or member of the organisation will be considered a safeguarding issue and a breach of conduct and behaviour and treated accordingly, as per **behaviour, equality, antibullying** and/or **staff conduct** policies/procedures.

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**To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:**

Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim

Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year

Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety

Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present

*○ Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras*

Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet at our provision, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policy, which you can find on our website.

### **SEXTING**

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) have produced guidance for schools on how to tackle sexting and 'youth produced sexual imagery' as sharing photos and videos online is part of daily life for many people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives.

This increase in the speed and ease of sharing imagery has brought concerns about young people producing and sharing sexual imagery of themselves. This can expose them to risks, particularly if the imagery is shared further, including embarrassment, bullying and increased vulnerability to child sexual exploitation.

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Making, possessing and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is ‘indecent’ is illegal. The relevant legislation is contained in the Protection of Children Act 1978 (England and Wales) as amended in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales). Specifically, it is an offence to possess, distribute, show and make indecent images of children. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales) defines a child, for the purposes of indecent images, as anyone under the age of 18.

Although the production of such imagery will likely take place outside of school, these issues often manifest in provisions/schools working with children and young people. Staff respond swiftly and confidently to ensure that children are safeguarded, supported and educated.

The response to these incidents should be guided by the principle of proportionality and the primary concern at all times should be the welfare and protection of the young people involved.

- All incidents involving sexting and youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to in line with the provisions policy, recording on a Cause for concern form and handed to the DSL.
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people 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 young person at risk of harm
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children’s social care and/or the police immediately.

### **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

Sexual exploitation can take many forms from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for attention/affection, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime and child trafficking. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops. We attempt to identify young people who are vulnerable to, or at risk of, sexual exploitation and who need services and interventions to keep them safe. We will pass on any information about CSE issues affecting the provision/schools, for example concerns about adults hanging around the provision or school, to the police.

### **SEXUAL VIOLENCE & SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment may occur between two children of any age and sex. It may occur though a single child or group of children sexually harassing or being sexually violent towards another child or group of children, it may happen both physically or verbally, online or offline. It can take many different forms; inappropriate sexual play, harmful sexual behaviour, sexting, grooming etc. Sexual violence can be defined as:

- Rape - intentional penetration by a male of the vagina, anus or mouth using a body part or other item, if the person being penetrated does not consent
- Assault by penetration – intentional penetration by person of the vagina or anus using a body part or other item, if the person being penetrated does not consent



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- Sexual assault – intentionally touching another person in a sexual way if the person being touched does not consent The Sexual Offences Act 2003 states that the age of consent is 16 years of age. Consent is only given freely by someone who has the capacity to make that choice. Consent to one sexual act does not imply consent to another and consent can be withdrawn at any time. Children under the age of 13 years of age cannot consent to sex. Sexual harassment includes behaviours such as:
  - Sexual comments, lewd comments, telling sexual stories
  - Sexual jokes or taunting
  - Physical acts, such as deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with their clothes
  - Displaying sexual pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
  - Online sexual harassment, such as sharing sexual images/videos (sexting), inappropriate sexual comments on social media, exploitation, coercion and threats

If not challenged, sexual harassment can normalise inappropriate behaviours and create a culture that may lead to sexual violence. Characteristics of healthy sexual behaviour include:

- A mutual interaction
- Consensual
- Exploratory and age appropriate behaviour
- No intent to cause harm
- Fun and humorous
- No power differential between participants

Characteristics of problematic sexual behaviour include:

- Behaviours that are not age appropriate e.g. young children using sexual swear words
- Some ‘one off’ low level incidents of low-key behaviour e.g. touching over clothing
- The behaviour is spontaneous rather than planned
- Behaviours are driven by peer pressure
- Where there are other balancing factors such as a lack of intent to cause harm, or a lack of understanding in the young person and the behaviours, or there is some remorse
- The targeted child may feel aggrieved with the behaviour but does not feel scared, and feels free to tell someone

Characteristics of harmful sexual behaviour include:

- Behaviours which are not age or developmentally appropriate
- Power differentials between young people such as age, size status and strength
- Elements of planning, secrecy or force
- Incidents increase in frequency and the young person’s interest in them is disproportionate to other aspects of their life
- Where the young person does not take responsibility for the behaviour and blames others or feels a strong sense of grievance
- The targeted child feels fearful, anxious and/or distressed (AIM guidance, 2017) Evidence suggests that girls, children with SEN and LGBT children are at greater risk. It is important that all disclosures are taken seriously and never considered as ‘banter’, victims are supported and there is a clear message that it is

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never acceptable. Any experience of sexual violence and sexual harassment is likely to have a significant impact on a pupil’s emotional well-being and adversely affect their educational attainment.

### **MANAGING INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARRASSMENT**

An immediate risk assessment should be carried out in order to establish what protection and support is needed for those involved. Staff are to report any concerns about a pupil to the designated safeguarding lead. An investigation and the necessary action, depending on the outcome, will be taken in conjunction with our ‘Anti bullying policy, If needed, the matter will be referred to social care services and the police.

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE (Including Teenage Relationship Abuse)**

Domestic violence and abuse can be defined as 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 gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

The current UK definition of domestic violence includes incidences between people aged 16 or over, but it is important to note that violence and abuse can occur in relationships between children and young people at any age. 50-50 staff will look out for the signs of relationship abuse and educate children about what healthy relationships look like and what abusive relationships are. Where concerns exist that a pupil may be at risk of domestic violence and abuse or experiencing relationship abuse, the DSL will be informed as soon as possible and the concern will be logged on a Record of Concern form.

The DSL will alert the relevant agencies and work with other professionals in order to safeguard the child concerned. Staff are also aware that Refuge runs a national domestic abuse helpline (0808 2000 247) which provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about others.

### **ALLEGATIONS FROM PUPILS AGAINST OTHER PUPILS CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE – including UPSKIRTING**

In most instances, negative conduct of pupils towards each other will be covered by our **behaviour** and **anti-bullying** policies. However, some allegations and child on child abuse may be of a more serious nature and raise safeguarding concerns. Allegations made against another pupil may include **physical abuse** (e.g. violence, particularly pre-planned; forcing the use of drugs or alcohol), **emotional abuse** (e.g. bullying, blackmail, extortion, threats, intimidation), **sexual abuse** (e.g. indecent exposure, touching, sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexting, forcing the watching of pornography or Upskirting, which is a criminal offence and typically involves someone taking a picture under a person’s skirt without them knowing, with the intention viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm and/or **sexual exploitation** (e.g. photographing or videoing indecent acts).

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Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’)

*Your responsibilities when responding to an incident*

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)

Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it

Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility)

Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers

Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

*Initial review meeting*

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate 50-50 staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)

If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children’s social care

If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)

What further information is required to decide on the best response

Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)

Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services

Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment

If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual

Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children’s social care if:

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The incident involves an adult

There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)

What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person’s developmental stage, or are violent

The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13

The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the DDSL’s and management as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children’s social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

#### *Further review by the DSL*

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children’s social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care and/or the police immediately.

#### *Informing parents/carers*

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

#### *Referring to the police*

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101

### **Recording incidents**

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded.

### **Curriculum coverage**

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

What it is

How it is most likely to be encountered

The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment

Issues of legality

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The risk of damage to people’s feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images

The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

## **GANGS**

In our area, gangs are prevalent and some children and young people (some with gang membership pasts) are vulnerable to gang membership or re-membership. Older pupils may also attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. It is also well documented that pupils suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people, under threat of violence.

## **MINIMISING THE RISK**

It is inevitable in our provision that some pupils will present a safeguarding risk to other pupils. A robust induction system ensures that we are informed as to whether a pupil arrives or re-joins presenting a safeguarding concern, for example after coming back into our provision following a period in custody or having experienced serious abuse themselves. Intelligent timetabling, groupings, supervision and personalised risk assessments, including daily dynamic risk assessments, are central to the effective management of safety in our provision. This dramatically reduces the possibility of negative conduct against other pupils, and therefore of allegations.

## **MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST OTHER PUPILS**

All staff members treat this abuse very seriously and never consider it as ‘banter’ or part of growing up. When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern:

- The DSL should be informed as per the usual
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances
- The DSL will contact social care services to discuss the case. It is possible that social care services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around the pupil. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social care services referral where appropriate
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in both pupils’ files

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police will be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim)

- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time, as per our antibullying policies
- Where neither social care services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation will take place in any case, using our internal procedures

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- In situations where the DSL considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan which will be monitored and evaluated with all adults working with the pupil. Individual risk assessments will also be amended accordingly.
- Both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) will be supported by the provision (if appropriate) school, what this looks like may vary depending on the case, however it may include: personalised timetable, family support and ongoing communication with external agencies.

### **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION: COUNTY LINES**

Within the ‘criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines’ guidance (September, 2018), the UK Government defines county lines as a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines, and includes, for instance, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft. The criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity; drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited or moved by gangs to courier drugs out of their local area, however children aged 15–16 is the most common age range.

Both males and females can be vulnerable to exploitation and it is thought that white British children are being targeted more because gangs perceive that they are more likely to evade police detection, however a person of any ethnicity or nationality may be exploited.

Gangs often use social media to make initial contact with children and young people. Gangs are known to target vulnerable children and adults; some of the factors that heighten a person’s vulnerability include:

- having prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)
- social isolation or social difficulties
- economic vulnerability
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- connections with other people involved in gangs
- having a physical or learning disability
- having mental health or substance misuse issues;
- being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- being excluded from mainstream education

In our area, gangs are prevalent and pupils (some with gang membership pasts) are extremely vulnerable to gang membership or re-membership. Older pupils may also attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above

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methods. It is also well documented that pupils suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people, under threat of violence.

Staff are aware that a key indicator to look out for is missing episodes; if a child has periods of going missing it is possible that they have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. This is another reason as to why our absence procedure is so important; we inform the Local Authority’s social care teams and police if we have been unable to obtain a reason for a child’s absence as the pupil is classed as a ‘missing child’. Staff also know that a pupil who has an unexplained amount of money on them, a new mobile phone or new clothing is an indicator that a pupil may be involved in county lines.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, child criminal exploitation can affect any child under the age of 18. It can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual; there is usually some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. It can also involve force and/or enticement-cased methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Staff should raise the concern with the DSL as soon as possible and log any information on a Record of Concern form.

Social care services will be contacted, as well as the police, if it is deemed that the pupil is at immediate risk of harm.

### **HOMELESSNESS**

A pupil’s welfare can be affected if they are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The DSL will be able to assist families in getting them support; in addition to discussions and supporting letters that can be provided to the Local Housing Authority, it may be deemed necessary to make a referral to children’s social care if the child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. It should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17-year olds could be living independently from their parents or carers, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children’s services will be the lead agency for these young people and the DSL will ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness includes household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviours as well as the family being asked to leave a property. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

### **DRUGS & SUBSTANCE MISUSE**

At 50-50 SYNC CIC we recognise that young people are at risk from a range of both legal and illegal substances and that substance misuse is an increasing social problem that can have devastating consequences for individuals, their families and the community as a whole. The provision is committed to the health, safety and welfare of children and will take action to help safeguard their well-being as well as providing support, advice and education about drugs and substance misuse as appropriate. The schools will never condone the misuse of substances, and the possession or supply of illegal drugs, and it will be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

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### **FABRICATED OR INDUCED ILLNESS**

Fabricated or induced illness is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. Where concerns exist about fabricated or induced illness, it requires professionals to work together, evaluating all the available evidence, in order to reach an understanding of the reasons for the child’s signs and symptoms of illness. Like other safeguarding concerns, it will be logged on a Record of Concern and the DSL will inform relevant agencies as soon as possible.

### **CHILDREN & THE COURT SYSTEM**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There is guidance available on the government website that explains the process and support that are available for children. Making child arrangements via the family courts following a relationship breakdown can be an extremely stressful time for the whole family. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool which parent/carer(s) may find helpful as it offers clear information in the dispute resolution service. Further information on the court system can be found at:

<https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/>

### **CHILD EMPLOYMENT**

Only children over the age of 13 may be employed to do light work. Regulations determine the type of work and restrict the hours a child may be employed for. Children working in the UK who are still of compulsory school age are required to have a work permit in all cases; it is illegal for a child to work and not have a work permit, even if this is in a family business. Different regulations apply to children in entertainment, where children under thirteen may be licensed to perform in commercial performances under strict guidelines and controls. Further information on children in employment can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/child-employment>

### **PRIVATE FOSTERING**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately, without the involvement of a Local Authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 years of age by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Each party involved in the private fostering arrangement has a duty to refer it to the Local Authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to begin, and not to do so would be an offence. The provision has a duty to inform social services if we become aware of a private fostering arrangement that has not been shared with the Local Authority. Although there is no duty for the provision to be informed of private fostering arrangements it would be helpful if the family could pass on the information to ensure support can be put in place. Further information on private fostering can be found at

<https://www.privatefostering.org.uk>

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

We have a risk assessment policy and health & safety policies for our site, which demonstrate the consideration we give to minimising any risk to the children when on our premises and when undertaking activities off site under the supervision of our staff. This also includes alternate provisions, where our provision is responsible for the safeguarding of pupils; risk assessments, site visits and a written statement is obtained from the provider stating that they have completed all the required vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff. 50-50 SYNC CIC acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard all pupils in potentially vulnerable situations such as changing rooms, while also

50-50 SYNC CIC

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acknowledging the child’s right to privacy. A professional judgement is made based on the age and the developmental needs of the pupils; appropriate supervision is achieved by staff being in close proximity to the changing room and pupils should be aware of this, knowing that adults will enter the room if necessary.

Risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff members. To ensure that the safety of our pupils there are procedures in place that allow staff to search pupils using a metal detector wand, this is to make sure that pupils are not bringing inappropriate materials or dangerous weapons into school. There will normally be two members of staff present during the search, and a member of staff who is of the same sex as the pupil will carry out the search. In exceptional circumstances, if there is a risk of serious harm to a person if the search is not carried out straight away, a pupil may be searched by a person of the opposite sex and without another member of staff present.

## 6. WORKING WITH CHILDREN’S FAMILIES

### CHILDREN’S INFORMATION

We recognise the importance of keeping up-to-date and accurate information about children. We will regularly ask all families to provide us with the following information and to notify us of any changes that occur:

- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- Names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility
- Emergency contact details
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from our provision (if different from above)
- Any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person’s access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- Name and contact detail of the child’s general practitioner
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

### REFERRALS TO OTHER AGENCIES

If we have a reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child we will always seek to discuss this with the child’s family in the first instance, but prior to this we would raise this with their referring school or LA. On occasion, according to the nature of our concern, it may be necessary for us to make an immediate referral to social care services when to do otherwise may put the child at risk of further harm either because of delay, or because of the actions of the parents or carers.

## 7. ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

### SAFER RECRUITMENT

When we recruit staff, we will always consider the vacancy that has arisen within the context of safeguarding children and ensure that we include the responsibility to safeguard children within the requirements of the role. We always consider carefully the knowledge, skills and experience required to safeguard children and include these within a person specification.

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## **ADVERTISING**

Our Leadership and teaching vacancies are advertised through TES and are advertised on our website. When using the services of a third-party advertising site/agency, we endeavour to advertise our vacancies in a manner that is likely to attract a wide range of applicants (e.g. on a nationally recognised website, such as the TES). The advertisement will always include a statement about our commitment to safeguarding children and our expectation that all applicants will share that commitment. The advertisement will state that the post is subject to all relevant statutory vetting checks.

## **APPLICATIONS**

All potential employee must complete an application form. Our application form enables us to gather information about a candidate's suitability to work with children by asking specific and direct questions. We scrutinise all completed application forms and do not accept CVs alone. The candidates indicate that they understand that they will be subject to vetting checks, including an enhanced DBS check, the prohibition from teaching check and, if appropriate, the s128 management check.

The recruitment process for leadership roles follows the typical structure; once a pre-determined closing date has passed, leaders shortlist candidates on the basis of the application forms submitted and invite successful applicants to attend interviews. Non-leadership vacancies, however, are far more frequent and usually recruited for within a shorter time-frame; as a result, it is not practical to adhere to the same recruitment protocol. For teaching, support and administration roles, therefore, candidates are invited to an initial meeting with the head of school on the strength of their CV, as and when we receive them. After a successful initial meeting, a candidate will be invited to complete an application form, make a visit to the school whilst pupils are on site followed by a formal interview.

## **INTERVIEWS**

We will always conduct a face-to-face interview

- Our interview panel will always contain at least two leaders and at least one who is safer recruitment trained
- Interview questions will seek to ensure that we understand the candidate's values and beliefs that relate to children
- All candidates will be asked to bring original documents, which confirm their identity, qualifications, right to work in the UK and any overseas checks
- An interview pack which consists of a set of general interview questions (including on safeguarding), interviewers' grades and the decision to appoint/not to appoint, is kept in the employee's file

## **SELECTION**

The interview panel will consider all the evidence gathered before making its choice, whereupon a verbal offer of the post will be made to the successful candidate. On acceptance of the post, candidates are given a formal offer letter which states that their appointment is subject to the school's receipt of two satisfactory professional references, the completion and return of all relevant paperwork and successful completion of all the relevant statutory vetting checks. Unsuccessful candidates are informed and offered feedback on their performance.

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## **REFERENCES**

We do not accept open references, letters of recommendation or testimonials

- We always take up at least two references; these must be completed on our own reference form and signed off by the head of HR before employment commences
- Our reference form includes questions specifically intended to reveal safeguarding concerns, such as enquiring about the candidate’s previous competency when working with children, asking if the candidate was ever subject to disciplinary action and if the referee knows of any reason why the candidate should not be given substantial access to children.
- Verification checks are performed in every instance in which the referee is deemed to have given insufficient, ambiguous or concerning information. Similarly, verification checks are performed whenever a reference is returned from an email address that is not recognisably professional or that does not obviously belong to the person from whom we are expecting to receive the reference.
- We verify previous employment history, where necessary.

## **VETTING CHECKS RECORDED ON THE SCR**

We arrange for a DBS check to be processed for all new staff, unless they are able to evidence an original DBS certificate that is subscribed to the DBS update service and which we can confirm remains current and accurate. All staff for whom we arrange to have a DBS check processed are required to subscribe to the DBS update service. Though we are not obliged to, we believe it to be good practice to re-check staff members’ DBS every three years, with their permission.

All staff working in regulated activity require an Enhanced DBS check.

Staff are always supervised while the DBS check is being processed (if relevant), and a DBS barred list check is always undertaken before staff commence their duties at 50-50 SYNC CIC.

All governors are DBS checked.

If a candidate declares at the interview stage that his/her DBS certificate will or might not be clear (particularly if it includes or might include a police caution, conviction, reprimand or warning), the DSL, CEO, Head of HR and proprietor will assess whether or not the disclosure should preclude the candidate from working at 50-50 SYNC CIC. If the candidate’s application is allowed to proceed, the DSL will complete a risk assessment for the individual, which will be kept securely and confidentially in their personnel file.

If a candidate fails to declare at the interview stage that his/her DBS certificate will or might not be clear, and this proves to be the case, the candidate will not be appointed as a member of staff.

We verify, where necessary, that the successful applicant has all the academic or work-related qualifications claimed and request the original academic & professional qualifications and certificates, including proof of qualified teacher status (QTS); we do not accept photocopies.

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We verify the successful candidate's identity and right to work in the UK; again, only original documents are accepted. National Insurance numbers are also recorded on the SCR

We verify that the candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job using a standard medical questionnaire. This form is completed after the interview process, so does not affect the appointment decision. It is, however, possible that a medical condition or health complaint could prevent an otherwise successful candidate from being able to meet the requirements of our conditional offer of employment. This will only apply if the health issue/concern renders the candidate unable to fulfil the requirements of the role, as laid out in the job description.

□ Any candidate who has lived or worked in a foreign country (anywhere outside of the United Kingdom) for three months or more, during the past five years, will be required to undertake overseas checks (confirming no criminal convictions or cautions and/or their good conduct whilst resident there). The nature, accessibility and speed of these checks may vary from country to country, but no candidate will be able to commence employment

Though it is not a statutory requirement, all staff who will have regular access to children will have a ‘prohibition from teaching’ check undertaken before they can commence employment.

A S.128 prohibition from management check will be carried out if a member of staff joins the leadership team or governing body.

### **AFTER APPOINTMENT**

The successful candidate will be given a formal offer letter and issued with a contract in due course. All offers of employment are dependent on the satisfactory completion and return/clearance of all requested forms and checks.

Newly appointed staff are issued with a copy of our staff handbook and shown where to find our key policies; they must sign to confirm they have read and understood these documents.

All new staff complete an induction with their line manager and a safeguarding induction with the DSL or one of the DDSLs, which includes familiarisation with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018). All staff have access to KCSIE and must read it and sign to say they have done so. Similarly, staff must sign to declare that they have received a safeguarding induction, have read, understood and agree to adhere to our policies and procedures and have sought clarity on anything that remains unclear to them. This is retained in the employee’s personnel file.

We will refer to the Disclosure & Barring Service any person whose checks reveal that they have sought work when barred from working with children.

### **SUPERVISION OF STAFF AND THE MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF**

We will always supervise staff and act on any concerns that relate to the safeguarding of children. A Our procedures for managing allegations of abuse against members of staff are simple and clear – the quick resolution of any allegation is an absolute priority. Put simply, allegations made should be reported straight away, normally to the CEO or the managing director. 50-50 SYNC CIC must then involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the allegations require investigation. In response to an allegation, suspending the member of staff is not the default response, unless

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there is no reasonable alternative. If suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification will be recorded by the CEO or managing directors and the individual notified of the reasons. Allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records and any that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious will not be referred to in employer references. Pupils who have made malicious allegations are likely to have breached the provisions behaviour policy and will receive an appropriate sanction which is likely to be a fixed-term exclusion.

The procedures for dealing with allegations should be applied with common sense.

However, it is important that even allegations that appear less serious are followed-up. Our procedure is:

1. The recipient of an allegation must report it to the CEO as soon as possible and never try to investigate it themselves. If an associate head, is implicated, it must be reported to the management and if the proprietor is implicated, it must be reported to the LADO.
2. A record of the report must be made by the appointed investigating lead, (depending on point 1) which must be timed, dated and include a clearly written name and signature
3. If the allegation is serious and credible and alleges that a member of staff has a) behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child, b) possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or c) behaved towards a child/ren in a way that indicated he/she is unsuitable to work with children, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be informed on the same day
4. If unsure, call the LADO in any case to discuss the allegation
5. Such consultation in point 3/4 will enable the LADO and the managing directors to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action
6. If this leads to a decision that no further action is to be taken this decision and the reasons for it should be recorded by both the managing directors and the LADO. They should agree between them the information that should be put in writing to the individual about whom the allegation was made. Both should then consider the action that should follow in respect of that individual and also the person (or persons) who made the allegation
7. If it is decided that the allegation warrants further action the LADO will take this forward
8. The CEO should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible, but only after consulting the LADO about whether this is appropriate at this stage and what information can be given to the person
9. Consideration must be given as to whether it is necessary to remove the subject of the allegations from contact with children at the provision, pending investigations and procedures arising from the allegation. Suspension should not be automatic, but should be considered if: a) there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, b) the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or c) the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal
10. Any decision to suspend shall be taken only after consultation with the LADO. It will take into account the safety of the child or children involved and the impact on any enquiry
11. Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation should be dispatched within 24 hours, giving the reasons for the suspension. The person should be informed at that point who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details
12. The subject of the allegations (whether suspended or not) shall be: a) advised to contact her/his trade union or professional association, b) treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed, processes involved and possible outcomes, c) kept informed of the progress of the case and of the investigation, d) clearly informed of the outcome of any investigation and the implications for disciplinary or related processes and e) provided with appropriate support as appropriate

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13. The CEO (or managing directors should the CEO be the subject of the investigation), shall be responsible for continuing liaison with Slough Borough Council’s LADO and all communication between the referring schools or LA and other agencies that may be involved in processes following an allegation
14. Confidentiality is essential and information about an allegation must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to: a) protect children, b) facilitate enquiries, c) avoid victimisation, d) safeguard the rights of the person about whom the allegation has been made and others who might be affected and e) manage disciplinary/complaints aspects
15. If, following the conclusion of child protection processes, further enquiries are pursued for the purpose of disciplinary, regulatory or complaint investigation, they should be arranged in a way that avoids the repeated interviewing of children or other vulnerable witnesses

For further information on the management of allegations against staff, please see our whistleblowing policy.

### **LEADING THE INVESTIGATION**

CONCERN RELATED TO ?	INVESTIGATION UNDERTAKEN BY
Any member of staff below the CEO	Proprietor – managing directors
Proprietor	Managing directors
Member of the Proprietorial Body	LADO

### **DISMISSAL AND OUR DUTY TO REFER TO DBS**

50-50 SYNC CIC are clear about its duty to refer a person who is deemed unsuitable to work with children to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS). Specifically, we refer to the DBS any member of staff who:

- has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child
- has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence
- is dismissed or receives disciplinary action because of misconduct relating to a child
- leaves their employment during an investigation related to misconduct relating to a child The DBS will then consider whether to bar the person. Referrals will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual.

### **SAFE PRACTICE**

We ensure that all staff are clear about the expectations we have of their behaviour towards all children and that any incident that falls below our expected standards will be dealt with appropriately, as per our staff conduct and disciplinary procedures.

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All staff are Team-Teach trained and receive very regular training on working with our pupils who have severe and complex social, emotional & mental health difficulties. All incidents where physical intervention is used are reviewed at staff briefing.

### **CHILDCARE DISQUALIFICATION**

We are fully aware of the legislation relating to childcare disqualification which can be (for example) for inclusion on the Children’s Barred List, being cautioned for specific offences against children/adults, grounds related to the care of children, having childcare/children’s home registration refused or cancelled and/or for being disqualified from private fostering. It can also be ‘disqualification by association’ which is when an employee lives in the same household as somebody who is disqualified. However, as we do not offer early or later years (no children who are aged 8), no childcare provision and no employees at either 50-50 SYNC CIC undertake childcare in their roles, it is unlawful for us to ask employees about childcare disqualification or disqualification by association.

### **GOVERNANCE- MONITORING & REVIEWING POLICY & PRACTICE**

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations apply a duty to proprietors of independent schools to ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Governing body and proprietor ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and fulfil their duty to remedy any weaknesses that are identified. Duties and responsibilities include ensuring that:

- Policies and procedures are effective and comply with the law
- Training is provided to all staff, at all levels. This includes induction training, annual whole school safeguarding training, and regular safeguarding training throughout the year
- All staff have read and understood the child protection and safeguarding policy, code of conduct policy, and part one of the Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE September 2018 statutory guidance
- Rod Douglas has been appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- The DSL will continually monitor our child protection and safeguarding practices and bring to the notice of the governing body any weaknesses or deficiencies at the half termly governing safeguarding meetings, via an oral report which is minuted and feeds into the Governors reports and meetings.
- The school works very closely with external agencies such as social care services, the police and health services to promote the welfare of pupils, and to protect them from harm
- Positive relationships are built with all of our families, and appropriate support is put in place
- The proprietor and governors will ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, across all of the sites to ensure that pupils are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material
- The proprietor and governing body will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- The proprietor and governing body will utilise the experiences of the staff team when shaping safeguarding policies and provide regular opportunities for staff to contribute to and shape the safeguarding arrangements and policy

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### **POLICY REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy and all policies at 50-50 SYNC CIC will be reviewed and updated by the leadership team & governing body as per our policy review cycle.

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations apply a duty to proprietors of independent schools to ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Governance at 50-50 SYNC CIC consists of a proprietorial body and a governing body.

The proprietorial and governing bodies ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and fulfil their duty to remedy any weaknesses that are identified. Duties and responsibilities include ensuring that:

- Policies and procedures are effective and comply with the law
- High quality training is provided to all staff, at all levels. This includes induction training, annual whole school safeguarding training, and regular safeguarding training throughout the year
- All staff have read and understood the child protection and safeguarding policy, code of conduct policy, and part one of the ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’, (September, 2022) statutory guidance
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This person must have overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection across the three sites, with deputy designated safeguarding leads in place at each of the school sites. The governing body is responsible for monitoring the DSL and holding them to account. ▪ The DSL will continually monitor our child protection and safeguarding practices and bring to the notice of the governing body any weaknesses or deficiencies at the governing body meetings, via a report which is minuted
- The DSL has a termly meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Governor



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## **APPENDIX 1: Safeguarding Record of Concern Form**

APPENDIX 2: What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (DfE 2015) Flowchart

### **•Be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect**

## **Be alert**

- Identify concerns early to prevent escalation.
- Know what systems the school have in place regarding support for safeguarding e.g. induction training , staff behaviour policy / code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead ( DSP) .

## **Question Behaviours**

- Talk and listen to the views of children, be non-judgemental.
- Observe any change in behaviours and question any unexplained marks/injuries
- To raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice , refer to the HT or principal, if the concerns is about the HT or  
Principal, report to Chair of Governors. Utilise whistleblowing procedure.

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## Ask for help

- Record and share information appropriately with regard to confidentiality
- If staff members have concerns, raise these with the school's or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead ( DSP)
- Responsibility to take appropriate action, do not delay.

## Refer

- DSP will make referrals to children services but in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to Children's Services on 03001234043 .

### APPENDIX 3: INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The framework for understanding children's needs:



50-50 SYNC CIC

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<b>Physical abuse</b>	
<i>Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.</i>	
<b>Child</b>	
Bruises – shape, grouping, site, repeat or multiple	Withdrawal from physical contact
Bite-marks – site and size Burns and Scalds – shape, definition, size, depth, scars	Aggression towards others, emotional and behaviour problems
Improbable, conflicting explanations for injuries or unexplained injuries	Frequently absent from school
Untreated injuries	Admission of punishment which appears excessive
Injuries on parts of body where accidental injury is unlikely	Fractures
Repeated or multiple injury	Fabricated or induced illness -
<b>Parent</b>	<b>Family/environment</b>
Parent with injuries	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Evasive or aggressive towards child or others	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, selfharm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Explanation inconsistent with injury	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Over chastisement of child	

<b>Emotional abuse</b>
<i>Emotional abuse is 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, not giving the child opportunities to express their views, ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate - hearing the ill-treatment of another and serious bullying (including cyber bullying).</i>
<b>Child</b>

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Self-harm	Over-reaction to mistakes / Inappropriate emotional responses
Chronic running away	Abnormal or indiscriminate attachment
Drug/solvent abuse	Low self-esteem
Compulsive stealing	Extremes of passivity or aggression
Makes a disclosure	Social isolation – withdrawn, a ‘loner’ Frozen watchfulness particularly pre school
Developmental delay	Depression
Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)	Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
<b>Parent</b>	<b>Family/environment</b>
Observed to be aggressive towards child or others	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Intensely involved with their children, never allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Previous domestic violence	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
History of abuse or mental health problems	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Mental health, drug or alcohol difficulties	Wider parenting difficulties
Cold and unresponsive to the child’s emotional needs	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Overly critical of the child	Lack of support from family or social network.

### **Neglect**

***Neglect is 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.***

### **Child**

Failure to thrive - underweight, small stature	Low self-esteem
Dirty and unkempt condition	Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
Inadequately clothed	Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
Dry sparse hair	Abnormal voracious appetite at school or nursery
Untreated medical problems	Self-harming behaviour

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Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold	Constant tiredness
Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury	Disturbed peer relationships
<b>Parent</b>	<b>Family/environment</b>
Failure to meet the child’s basic essential needs including health needs	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Leaving a child alone	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Failure to provide adequate caretakers	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Keeping an unhygienic dangerous or hazardous home environment	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Unkempt presentation	Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn
Unable to meet child’s emotional needs	Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
Mental health, alcohol or drug difficulties	
<b>Sexual abuse</b> <i>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 or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at sexual images or being groomed on line / child exploitation.</i>	
<b>Child</b>	
Self-harm - eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts	Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
Running away from home	Inappropriate sexualised conduct
Reluctant to undress for PE	Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
Pregnancy	Sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn	Poor attention / concentration (world of their own)
Pain, bleeding, bruising or itching in genital and /or anal area	Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant
Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners	
<b>Parent</b>	<b>Family/environment</b>

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History of sexual abuse	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Excessively interested in the child.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Parent displays inappropriate behaviour towards the child or other children	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Conviction for sexual offences	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Conviction for sexual offences	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Comments made by the parent/carer about the child.	Grooming behaviour
Lack of sexual boundaries	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.