



1. Background

- 1.1. The SCP's aim is to support the overall emotional health and wellbeing of children, young people, staff and parents in schools through one-to-one therapeutic provision, group work, baby-watching groups and mindfulness practice.
- 1.2. Children may, through the relationship provided to them by SCP, take the opportunity to share information about a harmful experience. This may happen in a direct way, through a verbal disclosure, or indirectly through play or demeanour or through another child. In addition, there may be some physical evidence of neglect or injury apparent which is noted by a member of the SCP team. SCP staff who are working with parents may also have cause to be concerned about the welfare of that person as well as their child.

2. Purpose and application of this policy

- 2.1. SCP believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people.
- 2.2. We recognise that:
 - The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
 - All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
 - Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

3. The purpose and scope of the policy

- 3.1. To provide protection for the children and young people who receive SCP's services including the children of adult clients
- 3.2. To provide all staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm
- 3.3. The policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, students and anyone working on behalf of SCP
- 3.4. We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:
 - Valuing them, listening to them and respecting them
 - Adopting safeguarding and child protection guidelines
 - Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
 - Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
 - Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children in an appropriate manner

- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

3.5. It is essential that members of SCP's team are aware of their duties with regard to safeguarding and ensure that:

- The safety and wellbeing of the child is promoted
- The safety and the wellbeing of any vulnerable adult is promoted
- The law and statutory guidance concerning child protection and safeguarding is complied with
- The policies of the school, the Local Authority and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board are complied with
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is understood by all staff and volunteers in SCP and is complied with.

3.6. It is not the role or the responsibility of SCP to investigate allegations of harm or risk of harm.

3.7. Disclosures or concerns arising out of any of these areas of service delivery will be treated the same and are all covered by this policy.

4. Statutory and legal framework

4.1. In England and Wales, the Children's Act of 1989 and 2004 provides the overall framework for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The child's welfare is to be the paramount consideration in all decision-making processes.

4.2. The Government's guidance on safeguarding children in England is called Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (often referred to as Working Together). Working Together acknowledges the need for all Registered providers of children's services, including those in the voluntary sector, to work in collaboration and to agreed local standards. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 sets out what schools and colleges in England must do to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18.

4.3. Section 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, and the Education and Inspections Act 2006, places upon school governors the duty to ensure that schools safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

4.4 This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), and the Governance Handbook. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

[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.

5. Recognition and reporting

It is essential that those who work with children and families should be alert to the signs of child abuse. There are four main categories of abuse:

5.1. Physical

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

5.2. Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Amongst other things, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of an inadequate caregiver)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Have regard or be responsive to a child's basic emotional needs

5.3. Emotional

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Amongst other things this may involve:

- Conveying to children they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or not valued
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations
- Lack of opportunity to express their views
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption
- Domestic Abuse

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone (Working Together, 2018).

As highlighted above, domestic Abuse is generally treated as falling under emotional abuse, with the cross-government definition (2014) of domestic violence and abuse being:

- 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 and emotional.

SCP considers that domestic abuse is a child protection issue and that if children witness or hear domestic abuse, this must be treated as a child protection matter, even if they are not directly involved in the incidents. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 states that impairment can be caused by seeing and hearing the ill treatment of another. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 specifies that children who witness domestic abuse are victims in their own right.

5.4. Sexual

Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware, including:

- Physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts
- Non-physical contact e.g. looking at or involvement in the production of sexual images
- Watching sexual activity
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

5.5. Other safeguarding concerns

In addition to the above, concerns about:

- Self-harming
- Suicidal thoughts/ideas
- Extremist views and behaviours
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Extremism and our duty under the Prevent Duty
- Forced Marriage
- Child on Child Abuse

Must all be treated as safeguarding and child protection issues.

6. Safeguarding advice/guidance and reporting for trainee/volunteer therapists

6.1. Contact their TL (Therapeutic Lead) in the first instance:

- If the TL isn't available and the disclosure is very clear then this should immediately be reported to the person responsible for safeguarding within the school you are working
- Do not take the child with you when reporting the disclosure
- If this happens during the last session of the day and the child is due to be collected by a parent/carer, leave the child with a responsible adult and then report the disclosure
- Do not discuss the disclosure with the parents/carers as this is the responsibility of either the CP lead or Social Services
- Write a cause for concern report, give a copy to the CP Lead and your TL and put a copy in the client's file

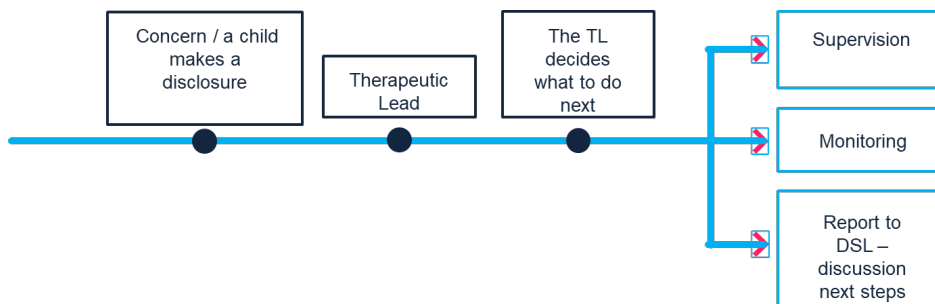
6.2. If you have a hunch that something is not right but have no clear disclosure:

- Discuss with your TL and in Supervision (if necessary)
- Write a cause for concern report, giving a copy of the school, the TL and keeping a copy in the client's file (noting that this hasn't been discussed with the client in the room)

7. Safeguarding advice/guidance and reporting for TLs (Therapeutic Leads)

7.1. If the disclosure is clear then report to the CP lead in that school, providing a written cause for concern giving copies to the school, sending to SCP and keeping a copy in the client's file

7.2. If the disclosure is unclear then discuss with SCP and take to Supervision recording as above



8. Confidentiality

8.1. In establishing an initial contract with a child and/or parent, the limits of confidentiality must be explained i.e. the SCP team member will need to inform the designated child protection

officer in school if there are concerns about the child's safety. This is an important part of the contract with the child at the outset of the work.

- 8.2. It is for the child and parent to choose what is and isn't spoken about during their therapy session or assessments.
- 8.3. The duty to safeguard children and share information about child protection concerns takes priority over all other considerations, including the confidential nature of the therapeutic relationship. SCP fully participates in multi-agency working, in line with government guidance, in order to share information and safeguard children.

"The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prohibit the collection or sharing of personal information, but rather provide a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately. In particular, the Data Protection Act 2018 balances the rights of the information subject (the individual whom the information is about) and the possible need to share information about them".

9. SCP personnel and Safer Recruitment Practices

- 9.1. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must also safeguard children from harm by those placed in positions of trust and care. Refer to SCP Safer recruitment policy
- 9.2. Complaints made against staff: Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff.
- 9.3 Concerns about a staff member, volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff in school, or an allegation is made about a member of staff posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Therapeutic Lead / CEO of SCP as soon as possible who will speak to headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors. The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the school procedures.

Any concerns raised about an SCP member of staff should be raised with the CEO as soon as possible who will then follow SCP procedures.

This is to confirm that I have read and understand this policy, and have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023:

Signed:		Date:	
Print name:			