



An alternative approach to education

Policy Reviewed:	September 2024
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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

The work of Plan B involves working closely with many young people. Plan B seeks to enable those young people to enjoy a safe environment. This means that Plan B will endeavour to protect the young people from any risks from staff, outside members of the public and each other whether that is within or outside the home, including online. Plan B provides help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge. Plan B's work with children pays due regard at all times to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

"Children" include everyone under the age of 18.

At Plan B, we review this policy at least annually in line with the Department for Education (DfE), Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), Hampshire County Council (HCC) and any other relevant guidance. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.

Overall responsibility for safety and wellbeing of children at Plan B: John Gillard (Director and DSL)

Deputy Safeguarding leads - Chris Hill and Gill Heron

- Hampshire LADO: 01962 876364 - child.protection@hants.gov.uk
- Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) : 01962 876355 - hscp@hants.gov.uk
- All important contact numbers are on Page 6 of this document

Plan B's Policy:

This policy applies to all members of the Plan B community (including staff, students, volunteers, parents and carers, visitors, community users) who have access to and are users of the organisation's systems both in and out of Plan B.

We maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

The Education and Inspections Act 2011 empowers the Directors to such an extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of students when they are off the Plan B site and empowers members of staff to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour. This is pertinent to incidents of cyber-bullying or other e-safety incidents



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covered by this policy, which may take place outside of Plan B, but is linked to Plan B as an organisation.

The 2011 Education Act increased these powers with regard to the searching for and of electronic devices and the deletion of data (see appendix for template policy). In the case of both acts, action can only be taken over issues covered by the published Behaviour Policy.

Plan B will deal with such incidents within this policy and associated behaviour and anti-bullying policies and will, where known, inform parents / carers of incidents of inappropriate e-safety behaviour that take place out of Plan B.

Any concerns that Plan B has for any of their students will be reported to the home school/commissioner.

Definitions of Abuse

There are four definitions of different types of abuse. Plan B staff will be aware of these definitions.

> Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

> Emotional Abuse

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. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

> Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape and buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

> Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Risks from staff

In order to protect the young people from any risk from staff members Plan B will take the following steps:

- > All staff working for Plan B will need to undergo a full DBS check to ensure their name does not appear on any child protection register. Plan B will register for the update service and yearly checks will be made. Recent references will be taken from previous employers or trustworthy professionals. Plan B will undertake to ensure that these references are appropriate and will seek further reassurances should there be any



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problem.

- When Plan B works with staff from other agencies or centres, Plan B will require assurances that the staff members have been cleared for working with children. Unless the staff come from the employing agency, Plan B will ensure that a member of their own staff accompanies the young people.
- Staff will be discouraged from spending time alone with the young people and where this is necessary they will follow sensible guidelines relating to the timing and nature of the event.
- Due to the nature of the work some physical contact may be necessary between staff and young people. This will be kept to a minimum and where possible the young person will be encouraged to help themselves. Except for when essential due to the nature of the activity, staff will avoid physical contact with the young people.

Staff are encouraged to create a 'whistle blowing' environment where inappropriate behaviour is challenged and reported, and where secrecy is not allowed to develop.

Risks from members of the public/visitors

Many of the activities undertaken by Plan B occur in public places, and may allow for potential contact with members of the public including visitors to Plan B. To minimise these risks Plan B will take the following steps:

- Each location used by Plan B will be subject to a risk assessment including child protection issues.
- The young people will be advised to avoid contact with members of the public and will be supervised in potentially hazardous situations.

Risks from the young people

Sometimes the young people Plan B work with can be a risk to each other. To minimise this risk Plan B will take the following steps:

- Any young person deemed to be a potential risk will have a risk assessment completed upon them before they join.
- The young people will be supervised by at least one member of staff most of the time, where the nature of the activity requires for the young people to be left alone they will always be in groups of at least three and never where a young person represents a specific potential risk. A group should not be unsupervised for more than 30 minutes.

Good Practice Guidelines for Staff

Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; watch language, tone of voice and where you put your body.

Do not engage in any of the following:

- – Invading the privacy of children when showering or toileting
- – Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person even in 'fun'
- – and intrusive touching of any sort
- – Any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.

Learn to control and discipline children without using any physical punishment.

Make sure another adult is present if a child needs special attention.



Do not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention seeking, especially if it is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

As far as possible, do not invite a child or young person to a situation where you are alone with them. Make sure other adults are about.

If students are alone in the car, ensure that you can drive safely without coming into contact with the young person, ask them to move if possible.

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

The prevent duty requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation. The risks include, but are not limited to, political, environmental, animal rights, or faith based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised. All staff have received Prevent training via e-learning ([Prevent training](#)) in order that they can identify the signs of children being radicalised.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation and the grooming of children can occur through many different methods, such as social media or the internet at different settings.

Any child who is considered vulnerable to radicalisation will be referred by the DSL to Hampshire children's social care, where the concerns will be considered in the MASH process. If the police prevent officer considers the information to be indicating a level of risk a "channel panel" will be convened and Plan B will attend this process.

Working with physically disabled children

- A person has a disability if they have a physical or medical impairment that has substantial and long term adverse effects on his or her ability to carry out normal everyday activities.' (DDA 1995)
- Disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and have the opportunity to achieve optimal development, in line with Every Child Matters outcomes, according to their circumstances and age, as other children.
- Safeguarding children practise should empower disabled children by giving them a voice
- All children have a right to independence, which includes a degree of choice around risk taking
- Staff can seriously add to the effect of any abuse if they are disempowering
- Staff need to be aware of practical ways of empowering children with disabilities and to share empowering skills with co-workers, especially when dealing with incidents of abuse or suspected abuse
- Disempowering disabled children in quite small, unintentional ways may silence them
- Empowerment may be needed over a considerable length of time to enable the disclosure of abuse, and, therefore, it needs to be a common thread running through all contact with disabled children
- If Plan B accepts a referral for a disabled child, the organisation will arrange specific staff training on best and most up to date practice with the particular impairment

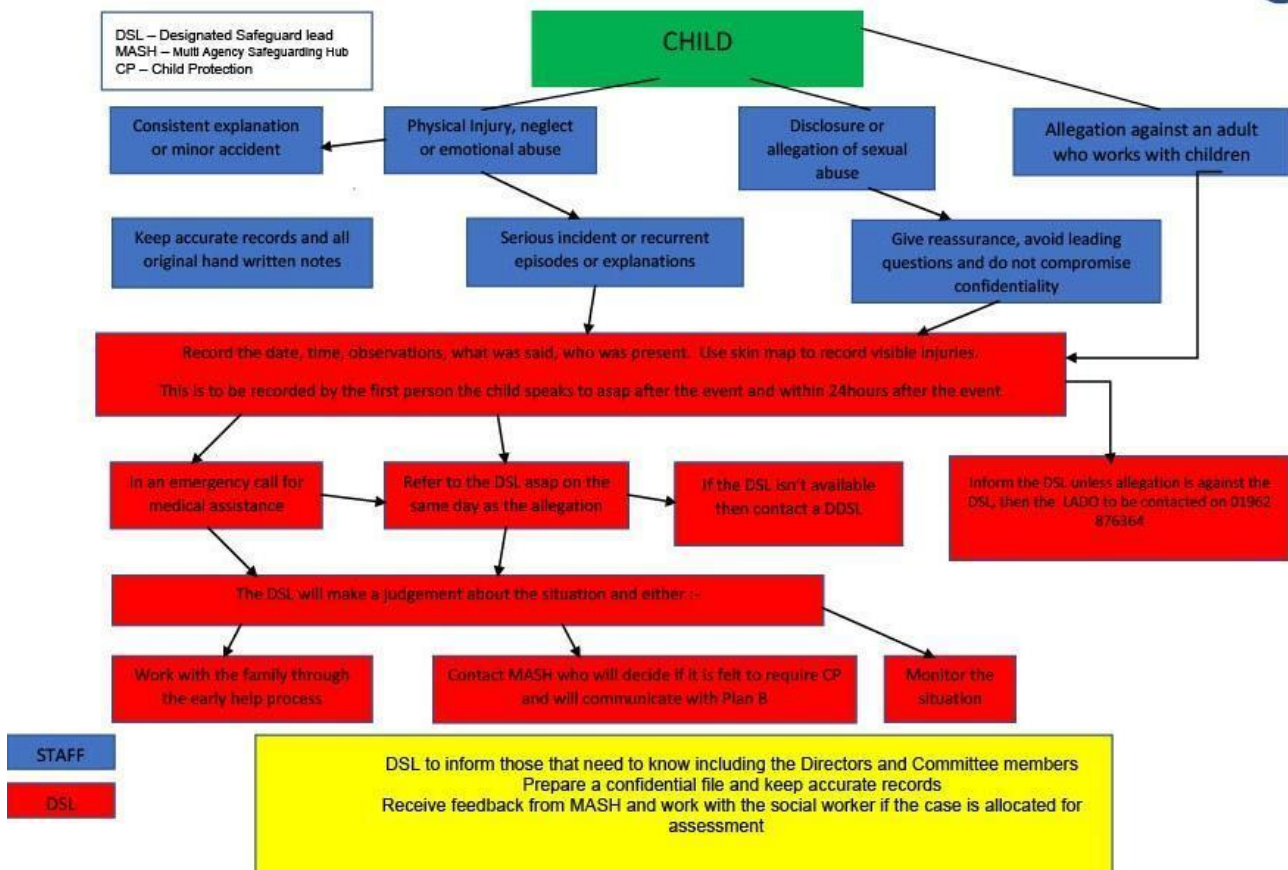
Disclosure

What to do in case of disclosure:

Check List: Use if a young person discloses details of abuse:

- Treat the matter very seriously
- Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Listen very carefully
- Do not press for information but try to clarify names, dates, times, places and nature of abuse

- Find out whether they have disclosed this information to others
- Check whether Social Services have already been informed
- Explain that you will have to inform a senior member of staff and the matter will be taken further
- Write detailed notes as soon as you can. Try to note the words used, the way they were said and the facts of who was concerned, the dates, times, places and nature of abuse
- As soon as possible inform a DSL of Plan B - John Gillard or DDSL Gill Heron or Chris Hill or the most senior member of staff available.
- The person informed will then take over responsibility for handling the situation
- If you are unable to contact a DSL of Plan B and the issue is urgent, staff should contact children's social care immediately on the most appropriate number:





Contact Numbers:

IF A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM CALL THE POLICE ON 999

SOUTHAMPTON

- Safeguarding Children Partnership Team (C.R.S)
02380 833004 (Mon - Thurs 0830-1700, Fri 0830-1630).
02380 233344 (weekends, bank holidays and out of office hours)
childrensresourceservice@southampton.gov.uk
CRS will triage and assess and decide whether MASH process is required
- LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
02380 915535 / 07500 952037
LADO@southampton.gov.uk

PORTSMOUTH

- Portsmouth MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)
0845 6710271 / 02392 688793 (During office hours)
0300 555 1373 (out of office hours)
MASH@secure.portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
LADO@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

HAMPSHIRE

- Hampshire Children's Safeguarding Professional Line: 01329 225379
- Hampshire Children's Services: Children's Referral team
0300 5551384 (Mon - Thurs 0830-1700, Fri 0830-1630)
0300 5551373 (out of hours)
- Hampshire LADO: 01962 876364 - Barbara Piddington (Eastern Area), Mark Blackwell (Western area)
child.protection@hants.gov.uk
- Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) : 01962 876355 - hscp@hants.gov.uk

If an allegation is made about a member of Plan B staff the person who receives the complaint must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately without speaking to anyone else. The Safeguarding Lead will then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer who will advise and may wish to manage the process from then on. If the allegation concerns the DSL or Director, the staff member should contact the relevant LADO directly.

Other Contact numbers:

- Childline - 0800 11 11
- NSPCC - 0808 800 5000
- Samaritans - 08457 90 90 90



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- Police 101 or, in emergencies, 999
- CAMHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services 0300 304 0050

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Plan B has appointed John Gillard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (also a Director) and is responsible for all child protection related matters and must:

- Treat the matter very seriously
- Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Listen very carefully
- Do not press for information but try to clarify names, dates, times, places and nature of abuse
- Find out whether they have disclosed this information to others
- Check whether Social Services have already been informed
- Explain that you will have to inform a senior member of staff and the matter will be taken further
- Write detailed notes as soon as you can. Try to note the words used, the way they were said and the facts of who was concerned, the dates, times, places and nature of abuse
- As soon as possible inform the other Director/s and the Committee Members of Plan B
- The DSL will take responsibility for handling the situation
- In the event of a complaint being made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the other Directors And Committee members will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate investigations are made.

Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for safety and wellbeing of children at Plan B: John Gillard (Director and DSL)

Deputy Safeguarding leads - Chris Hill and Gill Heron, who:

- Provide support and guidance to staff on Safeguarding and Child protection concerns
- Ensure staff are working within Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Ensure that Safeguarding is discussed as a standing item at all debriefs and team meetings
- Liaise with Plan B on safeguarding reports.

All staff and volunteers must:

- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action by reporting concerns as needed.

Physical Restraint of Young People

Plan B has a hands-off policy towards the young people and will only use physical restraint to prevent the real and imminent threat of physical harm to a young person or member of staff. Directors have taken the position that we would prefer damage done to property rather than to the physical/emotional well-being of a young person. Plan B believes that the use of physical restraint will often inflame a situation rather than defuse it. Plan B seeks to work with the young people by negotiation and common understanding and will never restrain a young person to prevent them leaving a site, unless this puts the young person in real danger of harm. The use of physical restraint can break down trust previously established between the staff and young people.



In the rare event of the need to restrain a young person, the most senior or experienced member of staff will be expected to do this, using as little physical contact as possible. When restraining a young person a member of staff is expected to use the long bones and not joints as points of contact. During the restraint Plan B staff will endeavour to maintain the dignity of the young person and not to hurt or injure them in any way. In the event of the young person needing to be restrained for anything longer than a minute the police will be called to take control of the situation.

The hold will be released at the earliest possible moment and steps taken to quickly defuse the situation and talk to the young person about what has occurred.

Once the physical restraint of a young person has occurred, the staff member involved must complete a Use of Physical Restraint Form at the earliest opportunity.

Excessive use of physical restraint or use of restraint in anger may lead to disciplinary action by Plan B. It is emphasised again that the company operates a hands-off policy in all but the most extreme situations. It is our experience that situations dealt with calmly and quietly can make the use of physical restraint unnecessary and build better relationships with the young people.

Online safety

Plan B works with children and families as part of its activities. Plan B will:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices •
 - provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety
- ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

Main areas of risk:

Content:

- Exposure to inappropriate content, including online pornography, ignoring age ratings in games (exposure to violence associated with often racist language), substance abuse
- Lifestyle websites, for example pro-anorexia/self-harm/suicide sites
- Hate sites
- Content validation: how to check authenticity and accuracy of online content

Contact:

- Grooming
- Cyber-bullying in all forms
- Identity theft (including 'frape' (hacking Facebook profiles) and sharing passwords)

Conduct:

- Privacy issues, including disclosure of personal information
- Digital footprint and online reputation
- Health and well-being (amount of time spent online (Internet or gaming))
- Sexting (sending and receiving of personally intimate images) also referred to as SGII (self-generated indecent images)



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- Copyright (little care or consideration for intellectual property and ownership – such as music and film)

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Directors:

- To take overall responsibility for e-safety provision
- To ensure that Plan B uses an approved, filtered Internet Service, which complies with current statutory requirements
- To be aware of procedures to be followed in the event of a serious e-safety incident.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people, male and female, of a range of ethnic origins and ages, in some cases as young as 10, receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators are found in all parts of the country and are not restricted to particular ethnic groups.

Staff should be aware of key indicators of children being sexually exploited which can include:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing sessions or not taking part in sessions
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing
- drug and alcohol misuse and
- displaying inappropriate sexualized behaviour.

Many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise themselves as such.

Return interviews for children who have been missing from education can help establish the reasons why they ran away and the support required and may prevent repeat incidents. Staff should work within the Plan B structures and their relationships of mutual trust with the children to carry out return interviews when appropriate and to record and pass on this information to colleagues via Daily Logs and to the Safeguarding Lead in an email report.

In assessing whether a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation or at risk of becoming a victim, careful consideration should be given to the issue of consent. It is important to bear in mind that:

- a child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex or any other kind of sexual touching
- sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence
- it is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them
- where sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old does not result in an offence being committed, it may still result in harm, or the likelihood of harm being suffered
- non-consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim and
- if the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim, or his or her family has been subject to violence or threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent and therefore offences may have been committed.

Where CSE or the risk of it is suspected, staff should discuss the case with the DSL. If after discussion there remain concerns, LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) procedures should be triggered, including referral to the LA children's social care and Police, regardless of whether the victim is engaging with services or not.

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty on staff along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the Police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or by visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for staff to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by 'to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out' is used for all professionals for whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Staff must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the staff member has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. The same duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (ie where the staff member does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning difficulties, for example).

If staff have any concerns over forced marriage they should discuss it with the DSL. The Forced Marriage Unit can give advice or information: 020 7008 0151 or fmua@fco.gov.uk

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer.

The internet and use of social media has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with other safeguarding risks staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Prevent Duty Guidance – England and Wales Covers the duty of schools and other providers in section 29 Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.



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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills>

<http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PSCB-Threshold-Document-FINAL.pdf>

Violence against girls and women

Violence against women and girls (VAWG), also known as gender-based violence and sexual and gender-based violence are violent acts primarily or exclusively committed by men or boys against women or girls. Such violence is often considered a form of hate crime, committed against women or girls specifically because they are female, and can take many forms.

If staff have any concerns over violence against women and girls they should discuss it with the DSL.

Upskirting

Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is now a criminal offence which must be reported to the police.

Children missing from Education

Plan B understands the importance of monitoring attendance in relation to safeguarding children and will report to the home school or local authority unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education.. We work to the guidance contained in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.'

Anti-bullying

Every child at Plan B has the right to a secure and safe environment. All members of the Plan B community have a responsibility to ensure that this exists and that any incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately. Plan B will take it seriously and investigate all incidents of bullying.

Definition

"Bullying is a deliberate act done to cause distress. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing and extortion through to physical assault on persons and/or property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life or series of such incidents."

Other aspects of bullying behaviour include:

- Verbal, physical or psychological intimidation



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- Attempts to make others feel inferior making demands
- Offensive remarks of a racial or sexual nature
- Derogatory remarks concerning family, home life, appearance, race or sexual orientation.
- Cyber bullying.

Recognising bullying

There are a number of behavioural signs, which may indicate that a child is being bullied. These include:

- Attendance to sessions refusal
- Absences
- Withdrawal
- Stomach aches, headaches, lack of sleep etc.
- Deterioration in work
- Bad behaviour
- Physical marks, bruises, scratches, etc.
- Wishing to remain in premises during lunch or break
- Wishing to remain with adults.

Anti-bullying Procedures

Plan B will:

- Investigate all incidents of bullying
- Take a serious view of bullying
- Take appropriate action
- Ensure that this policy is given a high profile throughout Plan B groups especially by staff
- Ensure that all staff, parents and pupils are aware of this policy
- Ensure good supervision of pupils at all times
- Include anti-bullying procedures and information in staff meetings.

Action by Staff

Members of staff will:

- Promote Plan B's anti-bullying policy in sessions
- If appropriate interview bullies and the bullied separately
- Involve the bully and bullied in what happens
- If appropriate use restorative justice strategies to resolve the problems between the young people
- Inform the parents/carers of both bully and bullied
- Use strategies to change the bully's behaviour
- Use restorative techniques where possible
- Involve other members of staff as appropriate.
- Encourage pupils to tell adults of incidents of bullying
- Encourage peer group pressure against bullying and bullies

Recording

It is essential that written records are kept of incidents, interviews and action taken. Therefore, members of staff are



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reminded to record incidents using Plan B's behaviour management recording procedures and work alongside the Principal. This should be done by the member of staff dealing with the matter and in serious or prolonged cases of bullying this will involve all staff.

Staff must use CPOMS to keep the DSL's informed of:

- Poor attendance and punctuality (see the Attendance Policy for full details).
- Concerns regarding appearance/dress.
- Changed or unusual behaviour.
- Concerns regarding health and emotional well-being.
- Deterioration in educational progress.
- Discussions with parents/cares about concerns relating to their child
- Concerns about home conditions or situations.
- Concerns about pupil on pupil abuse (including bullying and cyber-bullying/sexual abuse.)
- Concerns about extremism and radicalisation. When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made, as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. The school keeps a record of the referrals made to the MASH team/Prevent.

Self-injury

In keeping with Plan B's vision, values, and aims, this policy aims to address the issue of self injury. It will focus on the following:

- How to deal with young people who self injure and how to offer support in the short and long term
- To provide support depending on the individual needs of the young person
- To help all young people Plan B works with to improve their self esteem and emotional literacy
- To support staff members who come into contact with young people who self injure
- To prevent self injury spreading within groups of young people at Plan B
- To have clear guidelines for staff on who needs to be informed when a young person self injures.

What is self injury?

Self injury is any deliberate, non-suicidal behaviour which inflicts physical harm on a person's own body, and is aimed at relieving emotional distress.

Risk factors associated with self injury:

- Mental health disorders including depression and eating disorders
- Problems with drugs and/or alcohol
- Recent trauma eg bereavement or parents' divorce
- Negative thought patterns and low self esteem
- Bullying
- Abuse, sexual/physical/emotional.

Suicide

While self injury and suicide are separate areas, those who self injure and those who commit suicide are both in emotional distress. It is vital that all emotional distress among young people is taken seriously to minimize the chances of self injury or suicide. All warning signs and disclosures of suicidal thoughts should be taken extremely seriously.

Confidentiality



Staff should adhere to Plan B's policy on information sharing. Every effort should be made to encourage the young person to involve their parents/carers in the issues or decisions they are facing. The young person must be involved wherever possible, and consulted on her/his views whenever a decision to inform parents is made.

Roles and responsibilities:

Plan B will:

- Appoint a designated staff member to be responsible for self injury matters and liaise with them. This may be the same person as the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Ensure the designated person receives appropriate training on self injury
- Ensure that the policy is followed
- Ensure that first aid kits and staff training are up to date and readily available in case of an incident.

All staff are expected to:

- Listen to pupils in emotional distress calmly and in a non-judgmental way
- Report self injury to designated staff member in appropriate timescale
- Avoid making promises about confidentiality which they can't keep
- Promote problem solving techniques and non-harmful ways to deal with emotional distress
- Enable young people to access help and support from other agencies
- Provide accurate information on self injury
- Widen own knowledge about self injury and mental health disorders
- Be aware of health and safety issues such as first aid and cleaning blood spillage.

Designated staff member will:

- Keep records of self injury incidents and concerns
- Liaise with other agencies about help available for those who self injure
- Keep up to date with information about self injury
- Liaise with John Gillard
- Contact parents when appropriate. Involve the young person in this process. Inform the parent/carer about help and support available. Monitor young person's progress after an incident
- Understand when to seek support for their own feelings when dealing with self injury.