

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY UHS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

All adults working at Ursuline High School have a **duty of care** for the physical and mental well-being of all children here. For the purposes of child protection, a young person is recognised as a child up to the age of 18 years. Ursuline High Schools Child Protection Policy is available to all working here, and to parents. The staff code of conduct gives clarity to the measures needed to ensure that all employees and students can work within and enjoy being part of a safe and caring environment.

All adults working here must report concerns about a child, however insignificant that concern might be.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

1. **What to do if a child discloses something to me;**
2. **What to do if I am concerned about a child;**
3. **How to make sure I am conducting myself in a professional manner towards the children here;**
4. **What the procedure is to refer my concerns to the appropriate person in Ursuline High School.**

1. **Concerns:**

If you are worried about a child it is your professional duty to report your concerns. Your concern might be owing to some form of child abuse. You do not need to make a judgement but you do need to share your concerns. There are four official categories of child abuse:

Physical abuse (possible signs are: bruises, burns, cuts, marks, frequent 'accidents', unexplained injuries, aggressive play and behaviour)

Neglect (possible signs are: hunger, poor hygiene, poor attendance, tiredness, appearing withdrawn, poor achievement, poor appearance)

Emotional abuse (possible signs are: mood swings, poor relationships, excessive fear or anxiety, low self esteem, withdrawn, very passive, dominating behaviour)

Sexual abuse (possible signs are: inappropriate sexual behaviour with others, inappropriate sexual language, self harm, recurrent pains or headaches)

Furthermore you should be vigilant for signs of the following forms of abuse:

Child Sexual Exploitation: When a young person under the age of 18 is exploited by someone for sexual gain – the victim may not see the relationship as exploitative.

Female Genital Mutilation: Full/partial removal or injury to a women's genitalia for non-medical purposes.

Radicalisation: Grooming young people to believe in and support extremist points of view.

Peer on peer abuse: Abuse, including sexual and physical, enacted on a young person by their peers.

This is not an exhaustive list and all concerns about the safeguarding of children must be reported. Concerns might amount to no further action needed or they could lead to something significant.

The School will follow the child protection procedures set out by the Merton Safeguarding Children Board which are currently:

- **Think Family – to support children and adults in our most vulnerable families to reduce risk and ensure improved outcomes.**
 - (Trigger Trio: Parental mental health, substance misuse and domestic abuse, parents with learning difficulties)
- **Supporting Vulnerable Adolescents – adolescence is a time of significant change for all young people.**

- (CSE, CAMH including self-harm, preventing violent extremism and radicalisation, SYV)
- **Early Help – To develop an early help system that is responsive and effectively prevents escalation of concerns.**
 - (Embedding MASH Review, refreshing MWBM, reviewing Early Help)

2. During their conversations with the pupils it is best practice for adults to:

- allow pupils to speak freely;
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener;
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort –‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’;
- not be afraid of silences, and allow space and time for pupil to continue, staff will recognise the barriers the pupil may have had to overcome to disclose;
- clarifying or repeating back to check what they have heard if needed but will not lead the discussion in any way or ask investigative or leading questions – such as “Whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about it”;
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on;
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused;
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong;
- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go with you to see the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Otherwise let them know that you will be consulting them;
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the **record of concern form** and hand it to the designated lead;
- seek support if they feel distressed.

3. Reporting and Referral procedure:

- **Report to the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher Angela Watson (or in the case of an allegation concerning the Head teacher to the Chair of Governors as soon as possible); or a safeguarding officer as listed below.**
- **In a circumstance in which you believe that FGM may have been carried out on a pupil it is your responsibility to inform the police immediately, and the DSO. This is part of the new mandatory reporting duty.**
- All concerns must be shared with the appropriate person Ursuline High School:
 - Angela Watson – Assistant Head Teacher – Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Sarah Pearce – Safeguarding Officer
 - Kasia Snarska – Safeguarding Officer
 - Jacqueline McPeake – Safeguarding Officer
- Or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Make sure you pass on all written notes or statements with the time and date they were written.
- If you are reporting concerns, make sure you follow this up with the necessary safeguarding referral forms (appendix 10, and 12 where appropriate; of Safeguarding Policy, available on the shared area and in the staff room.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0208 545 3179.
- For further detail please refer to the full Safeguarding Policy.

