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Introduction

This policy is addressed to all mentors, volunteer teachers, and third parties associated with Kent Academies Network (KAN). It is available to parents and carers on request and is published on the KAN website. It applies whenever mentors, volunteer teachers or third-party contributors are working with students in the name of the organisation. This should be read in conjunction with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2023), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners'.

All mentors, volunteer teachers and third parties recognise the commitment of KAN to prioritising the safeguarding of children and are aware of their responsibilities.

KAN's overall aim for this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children who are students on our university access programme. The emphasis is on prevention using robust procedures, support and guidance for mentors, volunteer teachers and third parties and working to ensure unsuitable people do not work with children. We will always work in the best interests of the child. In situations where abuse is suspected, our paramount responsibility is to the child.

KAN is part of the wider safeguarding system (including the student's school), to protect children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Allegations of child abuse must always be given the highest priority and be referred immediately to the DSL. If at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care and the Police. Anybody can make the referral. The DSL will then decide on an appropriate course of action based on the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership guidelines.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and Contact Numbers

To report any safeguarding concerns or incidents please contact:

Sally Walmsley
KAN DSL
+44 (0) 1732455133 (ext: 317)
saw@sevenoaksschool.org

Isla Phillips-Ewen
KAN Director
+44 (0) 1732455133 (ext: 272)
imp@sevenoaksschool.org

The DSL will carry out the role in accordance with the [Sevenoaks School Safeguarding policy](#).

All mentors and volunteer teachers have a have a responsibility to be alert to the behaviour of other adults working with children and must share any concern about the behaviour of another adult towards or around a student (including all staff members, mentors and volunteer teachers) with the DSL (see Code of Conduct). They must also share any concern about peer on peer abuse with the DSL.

In addition, below are the details for the DSLs at each partner academy, these are not DSL's for the KAN programme but will need to be contacted by the KAN DSL if students at their school are involved

Sarah Barnes
DSL at Knole Academy
+44 (0) 1732 454608 (ext: 223)
sbarnes@knoleacademy.org

Emma Lawson
DSL at Oasis Academy, Isle of Sheppey
+44 (0) 1795 873591
Emma.Lawson@oasisisleofsheppey.org

Jonathan Scrivener
DSL at The Marsh Academy
+44 (0) 1797 364593
JScrivener@marshacademy.org.uk

Sarah Walker
DSL at Skinners Kent Academy
44 (0) 1892 534377
swalker@skinnerskent.org.uk

Richard Woolley
DSL at John Wallis Academy

+44 (0) 1233 623465
rwoolley@thejohnwallisacademy.org

Further contacts for reporting safeguarding incidents include:

Kent County Council	For the council education department: 03000412121
	For reporting concerns about a child: 03000411111 social.services@kent.gov.uk
	Out of hours and emergency: 03000419191
Kent Police	01622690690 or 111
Social Services 24/7	0300 333 5433
NSPCC	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk
Childline	Childline offers free, confidential advice and support to anyone under 18. 08001111
Report harmful content – the UKs Safer Internet Centre	Report here
Samaritans	Whatever you're going through, anyone can call the Samaritans and be listened too. You can also request third party calls if you have concerns about someone else. 116 123

If you think someone is in immediate danger, the best thing to do is call 999 for the emergency services.

Protocols

Mentors, volunteer teachers and third parties

In order to ensure that children on the university access programme are protected we will ensure that our mentors are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Any third-party contributors are always supervised by mentors and/or teachers. All volunteer teachers are fully-trained teachers from one of the five academies, Sevenoaks School, or Tonbridge school.

All mentors receive induction training prior to their starting in work for KAN and annual training thereafter. This training will give an overview of the organisation and its purpose, values, services and structure in addition to procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and procedures relating to confidentiality issues. All mentors are given an enhanced DBS check, basic safeguarding information and a copy of this document and Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020 part 1), which they are required to sign to confirm they have read and understood.

Codes of Conduct for mentors, volunteer teachers and third parties

KAN has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between mentors, volunteer teachers, third parties and children, and that all mentors, volunteer teacher and third parties are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

Members of staff and volunteer teachers are required to work in a professional way with children at all times.

The following should enable children to be safe from harm and adults protected from false allegations or misunderstandings:

- Treat pupils with respect and dignity.
- Do not touch children in an inappropriate or intrusive manner. If a child is distressed a hug might be appropriate, but only in a public place or with other people present.
- One-to-one meetings should, whenever possible, take place in public or semi-public places, online this can include a zoom break-out room.
- Do not allow abusive peer activities, e.g. bullying or initiation ceremonies.
- Do not use physical punishment to control or discipline children.
- All direct online/remote contact with KAN students should be via Learnium, no volunteer teachers, mentors or third parties should have access to student email addresses or vice-versa.
- Any emails from students, which are forwarded to mentors or volunteer teachers, must remove the student email address. Any further must continue via the Director, who will continue to forward messages while removing personal addresses.
- Mentors, volunteer teachers, or third parties must not request or share private contact details (including addresses and phone numbers).
- Mentors, volunteer teachers, or third parties must not follow or become a friend of students on social media, including after you or they have recently left the programme.

At residential events:

- The DSL will always be on standby for all residential events.
- The Director or a volunteering teacher lead will be on site at all times for residential events.
- Mentors should avoid being alone with an individual pupil.
- If mentors are visiting students in their room, the doors should be propped open.
- Mentors will always have separate bathrooms and changing rooms to students.

Online Activity:

- All direct online/remote contact with KAN students should be via Learnium, no volunteer teachers, mentors or third parties should have access to student email addresses or vice-versa.
- Learnium correspondence is overseen by the Director.
- The "main room" of virtual sessions on zoom will be recorded to the cloud (including the chat) and mentors/volunteer teachers will always be present with students.
- One-to-one and small-group meetings should, whenever possible, take place in public or semi-public places, online, a zoom break-out room is equivalent to a semi-public place as these will not be recorded but are open for other supervisors to 'pop-in.'
- If a disclosure happens (see Best Practice for dealing with disclosure) online, mentors, volunteer teacher or third parties will ensure a copy of the chat/message is kept and/or copy and paste the full message into a word document to pass onto the DSL.

Best practice for dealing with disclosure

- Stay calm and be available to listen.
- Listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying.
- Do not promise confidentially to the pupil involved.
- Inform the child that you cannot keep the information confidential and that this information will now have to be passed on.
- Reassure the child and let them know they were right to inform us.
- Discuss normally without pressurising and without using leading questions.
- If at all possible, try not to question what the child is telling you – this can confuse and complicate the child's memory of the event.
- Don't put words into the child's mouth but note the main points carefully.
- Repeating back the words used by the child indicates that you have listened carefully and have acknowledged/validated the child's thoughts and feelings.
- If possible and appropriate, try to take notes during the disclosure. Always write note up as soon as possible.
- If the disclosure happens online, please ensure a copy of the chat/message is kept and/or copy and paste the full message into a word document to pass onto the DSL.
- Keep a full record (see record keeping) and timeline of events – date, time, what the child did, said, etc.
- Immediately inform the DSL.

Record Keeping

Good record keeping is essential in ensuring children's ongoing welfare and safety are promoted and monitored.

For reporting incidents, concerns and/or disclosure records should include:

- child's name,
- date of birth,
- the child's normal context e.g. behaviour and attitude,
- the incident(s) which give rise for concern with date(s)
- and time(s)
- and a verbatim record of what the child said.

A form is available from the DSL and should be submitted a.s.a.p. and certainly within 24 hours. If recording bruising/injuries, the position, colour, size, and shape should be indicated on a body map. If evidence takes the form of inappropriate images these must never be printed off or forwarded (as that would constitute distribution), however if images may be needed as evidence they should not be deleted and/or it may be appropriate to keep the device. The record should be dated and signed and forwarded to the DSL, who will retain it in a confidential file.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing.

The Director will maintain a file of concerns and child protection records.

Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. KAN is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognises 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:

- 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 abuse or a family member is in prison.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, trafficking, involvement in gangs, forced marriage, or radicalisation, are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after.

Understanding Abuse and Neglect

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect (KCSIE)

Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children (peer on peer abuse, see below).
Peer on Peer Abuse	Whilst it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. KAN has a zero tolerance to peer on peer abuse. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. KAN will record and monitor all cases and carefully consider in each case the support measures for the victim and perpetrator.
Physical Abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
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, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.
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.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger, failing to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) 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. Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm), sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault, sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse, 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 (this is a criminal offence), sexting, also known as youth produced sexual imagery, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions may also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement, and its Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines Guidance.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child, or young person under the age of 18, into sexual activity a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person, male or female, under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;

- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex, organised abuse; and
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

A child may suffer, or be at risk of suffering, from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. In all cases the Child in Need/Child Protection Procedure should be followed, or that of the authority in which the child is normally resident. A summary of Kent's procedure is available here (https://www.kscmp.org.uk/).

Signs of Abuse and Neglect (NSPCC)

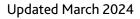| **Physical Abuse**	Determining whether an injury is accidental or non-accidental is a skilled job. It requires a full assessment of the injury, explanation, history and circumstances. This is not the role of a teacher.
	There are, however, a number of injuries which should be regarded with concern and may indicate a nonaccidental cause. Some may need medical assessment and treatment, occasionally urgently. Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations, or a delay in seeking treatment for the child, should signal concern.
	Physical indicators - Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent - Untreated injuries or lingering injuries not attended to - Bruises and abrasions around the face, particularly if they are recurring - Damage or injury around the mouth - Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes - Bruising to soft areas of the face, e.g. cheeks - Bite marks - Burns or scalds (note the pattern and spread of the injury, e.g. cigarette burns) - Wheals suggesting beatings
	Behavioural indicators - Improbable excuses given to explain injuries - Refusal to discuss injuries - Admission of punishment which appears excessive

- Shrinks from physical contact
- Refusal/avoiding getting undressed for gym – keeps arms and legs covered in hot weather
- Fears medical help
- Self-harming behaviours
- Aggression towards others
- Over compliant behaviour or a 'watchful' attitude
- Deterioration in school work
- Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is often the most difficult to detect. A child might be clean and physically cared for but be emotionally neglected.

The parents' or carer's attitude to the child might be characterised by coldness, hostility, disinterest. They may resort to scape-goating or humiliating the child and the giving of age inappropriate responsibilities. They may give the impression that the child can never please, or may have expectations which are inappropriate, excessive or unrealistic.

Physical indicators
- Delays in physical development, e.g. milestones delayed for underweight, lethargic (there may be medical reasons for this, medical advice is essential)
- Self-mutilation

Behavioural indicators
- Delays in intellectual development
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Extremes of compliance, passivity and/or aggression/provocativeness
- Compulsive stealing, e.g. other children's packed lunches
- Rocking, thumb sucking, hair twisting, etc.
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse   Fear of parents being contacted

Neglect

Severe neglect is often characterised by the child being underweight, small in stature and with a poor physique. The care of neglected children is often poor and they present as unwashed, unkempt and inadequately fed and clothed (e.g. thin cotton dresses and plastic sandals in snow).

However, poverty, deprivation and neglect are not the same thing. Children may live in poverty but only a small number of these will be neglected. Assessment over time and with the help of other agencies is vital.

Physical indicators
- Constant hunger

- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Untreated medical problems

Behavioural indicators
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Low self-esteem
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Destructive tendencies
- Poor relationships with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse affects a child or young person emotionally and physically. It is difficult to detect as the physical indicators are not directly visible. Often the indicators that a child is being sexually abused are exhibited through behaviour. Sexual abuse occurs in every class, cultural and occupational group.

Sexually abused children may take refuge in an appearance of normality, e.g. some children immerse themselves in schoolwork as a way of 'blanking out' the abuse. Emotional and behavioural difficulties may result for example from abuse and neglect, physical or mental illness, sensory or physical impairment, or psychological trauma. In some cases emotional and behavioural difficulties may arise from or be exacerbated by circumstances within the school environment, for example, a change in teacher or routine.

Physical indicators
- 'Love bites'
- Other bite marks
- Self-harming behaviours (e.g. deep scratches/cuts on arms)
- Tiredness, lethargy
- Pregnancy or Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Behavioural indicators
- Sudden changes in behaviour and school performance
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown for example in drawings, vocabulary, games, etc.
- Provocative sexual behaviour
- Frequent public masturbation
- Fear of undressing for gym
- Tendency to cry easily
- Regression to younger behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Depression and withdrawal

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Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour. Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- be involved in abusive relationships
- intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hang out with groups of older people, or antisocial groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associate with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- go missing from home, care or education They may also show signs of sexual abuse or grooming

Other Signs   Patterns of absence and prolonged absence may be indicators of safeguarding issues including sexual abuse and exploitation.

Signs of radicalisation   There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views.

Signs of Female Genital Mutilation   This is most likely to be identified through disclosures, but other indicators can be found here.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation)