

Sysco Group

Prevent and Safeguarding Strategy

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Safeguarding Information, Advice & Guidance

1. Introduction

This strategy covers the provision of Sysco Business Skills Academy and Brighter Futures Merseyside which sits under the umbrella of the Sysco Group. This Strategy applies to staff, learners, Sub-contractors, Employers, visitors and multi-agencies working on behalf of or in conjunction with the Sysco Group.

Sysco is committed to achieving the highest standards of safeguarding and well-being of all learners and fully recognises its responsibilities for protecting vulnerable groups.

Sysco promotes a multi-agency approach which emphasises the need to recognise the vulnerability of children and young people to radicalisation, work to safeguard those at risk, and work together to provide the skills, understanding and support to children and young people to make critical choices.

Sysco will ensure where we are a subcontractor that we will endeavour to follow the main providers referral process and safeguarding procedures.

What does Safeguarding actually mean?

- Safeguarding is a proactive process of protecting and ensuring the safety and well-being of young and vulnerable learners & adults at risk, whether from crime, other forms of abuse or from being drawn into extremism activity.
- Safeguarding may involve instances in which a young or vulnerable learner is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or at risk from radicalisation.
- Safeguarding involves adopting safer recruitment practices to assist in identifying persons who are unsuitable to work with young or vulnerable learners.

What are the benefits of effective Safeguarding for learners?

- When learners feel safe and secure, they can concentrate on learning.
- Learners can rely on those people in positions of trust.
- Learners are appropriately protected, and all issues are dealt with effectively.
- Learners and Staff are protected from risks associated with radicalisation and forms of extremism.

What are the benefits of effective Safeguarding for staff?

- Staff are protected from malicious and misplaced allegations.
- Staff are clear about individual responsibilities, roles and boundaries.
- Promotes a safe culture and fosters an environment where wellbeing is prioritised.

Sysco have a dedicated Safeguarding team that are responsible for reviewing and updating this strategy annually as well as accompanying policies, procedures and monitoring the impact of Safeguarding support. The Safeguarding team is built up of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with the support of the central safeguarding team, there are also Safeguarding and Prevent leads at each education campus.

2. Policies

Sysco has a number of policies and procedures in place specific to safeguarding. There are separate policies in place for Learners and Employees.

Sysco promotes an ethos where young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. Sysco recognise the positive contribution it can make towards the Prevent Duty. Prevent is part of the governments overall counter terrorism strategy, the aim of Prevent is to reduce the threat from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

There are key elements to our Safeguarding and Prevent Strategy, the Sysco Group will endeavour.

- To ensure the company operates safer recruitment practices in accordance with legislative requirements.
- To raise awareness of Safeguarding & Prevent throughout the organisation and ensure that staff are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge to support learners effectively and help keep them safe.
- To safeguarding and support learners including those with special education needs and education Health Care Plans, supporting minority groups and disadvantaged or vulnerable learners through assessment, support and agreed interventions.
- We will value diversity, remove barriers to learning and accessing education and act in the best interests of every learner so they can all flourish and reach their potential.
- We will prioritise the safety, well-being and dignity of every learner, creating an environment where learners feel safe and supported.
- To challenge discrimination, promote equality and make principled decisions that put learners first.
- To continuously review and improve Safeguarding & Prevent procedures.
- To measure and monitor the impact of Safeguarding to support Learner achievement.
- To ensure prevent legislation and policies are effectively implemented.
- Where there are potential issues with learner attendance, key staff will liaise with the relevant emergency contacts and follow procedures. Also referred to in retention and achievement strategy.

It is our intention to ensure all Learners feel safe and have adequate information to allow them to raise concerns. Sysco will ensure that the priorities detailed are actively promoted.

In addition to the above and to support safeguarding and prevent at Sysco we will adhere to the following:

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015,

Section 26 Applies to schools and other providers;

To have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2026) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of Children. It also provides the framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB's) to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) sets out the legal duties you must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18 in schools and colleges.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act (2026) became law in 2026, targeting higher educational standards and stronger safeguarding. Key rules are phased in immediately with others on a phased timeline;

Immediate Implementation (From April 2026): Cost-of-living measures, free breakfast clubs, branded uniform caps, and expanded free school meals apply.

September (Academic Year 2026/2027): Schools must follow updated expectations for phone-free environments, allergy policies, and home-school registration rules.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2026/21/contents/enacted>

Crime and Police Act 2026 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026 and introduces broad criminal justice reforms across England and Wales. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 includes student work experience, specifically regarding safeguarding and vetting rules. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/crime-and-policing-act-2026>

DFE Guidance and suggested practice on branded uniforms;

Branded uniforms and kit for performing arts are allowable in DfE 16-18 study programmes. However, because these courses often require specialized attire (e.g., dancewear, stage blacks), providers must follow statutory guidance to ensure costs are strictly controlled, transparent, and do not become a barrier to participation. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Specific DfE regulations and best practices include:

- **Limits on Branded Items:** The DfE strictly limits the number of compulsory branded items an institution can mandate. All items specific to the course—including equipment, accessories, and performance wear—must generally be capped at 3 or fewer items year-round.
- **Financial Assistance:** Recognizing that performing arts kit can be expensive, the government requires providers to offer robust financial support, typically through the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund. Discretionary bursaries from this fund can be used specifically to cover the costs of essential uniform and course equipment for eligible students.
- **Transparency:** Providers are required to publish their uniform and kit requirements, along with costs and purchasing locations, clearly on their website. This information should clarify whether an item is mandatory or optional.
- **Second-Hand and Flexible Options:** Institutions should have second-hand options available to reduce costs for families. Additionally, substituting generic black or white clothing for highly branded pieces is highly encouraged to keep costs reasonable. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7]

To confirm the specific compulsory items and find out if you qualify for an equipment allowance, you should consult the 16-19 Bursary Fund guidelines provided directly by your school or college.

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 establishes the core regulatory framework for the UK higher education sector. It defines the scope of statutory oversight, covering funding, quality standards, freedom of speech, and fair access to third-level and postgraduate studies.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/16/section/1>

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff at Sysco and sub-contractors to be aware and promote the principals of the Safeguarding & Prevent policies and procedures. Sysco recognise and adhere to the statutory requirements within safeguarding legislation, and we will continue;

- Constitute and operate a Safeguarding Focus Team to be chaired by the Managing Director.
- Ensure there are Designated Safeguarding Officers in place who will receive ongoing appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure the Safeguarding Officer roles are communicated via our staff and learner induction process, internal training and awareness sessions, via the learner review process and via posters located throughout the centre.
- Continue to ensure that all staff are aware and understand their responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and in being alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and radicalisation and for referring any concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Ensure all staff have read and understand part one of the statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education”.
- Ensure health and safety is promoted at all learning sites, this includes adhering to updated government guidance.
- Support learner bursary applications to further provide support and reduce any barriers and enhance the learning experience and journey.
- Ensure that effective Safeguarding procedures are developed, implemented, and monitored to ensure their effectiveness. These procedures are based on the 5R’s approach of Recognition, Response, Record, Report, and Refer.
- Ensure that we develop effective links with relevant external agencies, local safeguarding boards and co-operate with any requirements with any safeguarding referral matters. Which would include Local Safeguarding Board, Local Prevent Officer and Local Police.
- Ensure that we keep written records of safeguarding concerns, even when there is no need to refer the matter to the relevant agencies.
- Maintain up to date risk assessments.

- We will monitor the impact of Safeguarding support during the Senior Managers and Safeguarding Meetings.
- Ensure all records are stored securely and in accordance with GDPR legislation.
- Refresher training will take place regularly and Sysco will review staff Safeguarding qualifications every two years.
- All staff will complete up to date prevent training.

Furthermore, Sysco recognise that because of the ongoing contact with learners, staff are well placed to identify areas of concern. Staff and subcontractors should not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to learners outside of the purpose of their work. Staff and subcontractors should also not give out their personal details.

The Sysco Group will therefore;

- Establish and maintain an environment where learners feel secure and are encouraged to communicate with our staff.
- Staff and subcontractors working in one-to-one situations with learners should ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations within the agreed setting. Always report any situation where a learner becomes distressed or angry and consider at all times the needs and circumstances of the learner involved.
- All work with learners should usually be undertaken in the training setting or recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent or specific situation where it is necessary to make a home visit. This means all staff and subcontractors should; agree the purpose of any home visit with their manager, ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager, ensure that staff are not exposed to unacceptable risk. No staff or subcontractor other than in an emergency should not enter a home of a learner if they are under 18 years old and the parent/carer is absent.
- In certain situations, staff and subcontractors may be required or offer to transport learners as part of their work. Staff should not offer lifts to learners unless this has been agreed by a manager. Where possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken with one additional adult to the driver acting as an escort. Staff need to take into account the specific needs of the learner and ensure if they need to be alone with a learner this is for the minimum time.
- Staff to ensure learners know that there are designated staff within the company whom they can approach if they are concerned or worried.
- Include opportunities within our ongoing assessment process and classroom delivery for learners to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe.
- In taking photographs or videos with learner staff and subcontractors need to adhere to GDPR legislation and ensure signed consent is obtained.
- Ensure Employers are well informed and that they are actively committed to ensuring there are Safeguarding policies in place and Learners will be protected.

4. Safer Recruitment

Sysco will take all possible steps to prevent unsuitable persons working with young or vulnerable learners and in doing so will follow the good practice contained within the legislative document Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007) and the Safer Practice, Safer Learning document produced by NIACE.

When interviewing potential staff, we will ensure that:

- There is an open recruitment process
- There is a rigorous interview with specific questions relating to Safeguarding

After the interview has taken place, the following points will take place which includes references sought, ID/Right to Work/ DBS checks:

- Applicants' identity and claims to academic or vocational qualifications will be verified
- References will be taken up by direct contact with referees
- Evidence of the date of birth and address of the applicant will be obtained via a right to work in the UK and/or a DBS.

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS) will be conducted in all instances where the role allows.

Post Appointment

All staff will take part in an induction programme which will vary dependent on the nature of the role. The purpose of this will be to:

- Provide awareness and explanations of relevant policies and procedures
- Provide support for the role in which they have been engaged
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff to ask questions or discuss concerns relating to their role or responsibilities
- Enable individual line managers and colleagues to recognise any concerns about the person's ability or suitability from the outset and address them if deemed appropriate.
- Ensure that individuals are aware of reporting concerns and who the Designated Persons for Safeguarding are
- Ensure that individuals are aware of other relevant policies and procedures; i.e. disciplinary procedure, E&D Policy

Steps to take when dealing with allegations against staff

This applies should anyone has concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff where they have:-

- Behaved inappropriately in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a learner.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to learner.
- Behaved towards a learner in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with them.

The Designated Person for safeguarding should be informed of the matter immediately. (Where the Designated Person nominated for safeguarding is involved in the allegation, the most senior member of staff should be informed).

A formal review will take place which:

- Will determine if the police need to be involved immediately to protect the person further.
- A referral will be made to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). The LADO will:
 - manage and have oversight of individual cases.
 - Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations.
 - Liaise with the Police and other agencies.
 - Record referrals appropriately.
 - Monitor the progress of cases to ensure they are progressed in a timely way with a fair and consistent process.
 - Chair multi agency allegation management meetings, when they are required.

The role gives all agencies a central point of contact for them to discuss and make notifications falling within the Local Authority Designated Officer threshold criteria. For more information:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/children-and-families/childrens-social-care/children-at-risk/>

- Will record all details received and secure them safely.
- Will ensure the alleged member of staff is fully conversant of the allegation, is supported where relevant and free from victimisation.
- Will determine whether suspension is appropriate whilst undertaking the investigation, with guidance from the LADO.

All allegations will be acted upon, however due to the variance in the risk levels, all allegations will be treated individually, and the appropriate actions assigned on a case-by-case basis with guidance from the LADO.

Anonymous Allegations

Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective, and depending on the level of information, the matter may not be investigated at all.

The decision taken to investigate the matter further will depend upon:

- The seriousness of the matter.
- Whether the concern is believable.
- Whether an investigation can be carried out on the information provided.

Staff Code of Conduct

The code of conduct should guide all actions taken by staff and anyone else working on behalf of The Sysco Group. If it is necessary to act contrary to it (for example visiting a learner in their home) you should only do so after discussion and approval with your line manager.

- Place the safety and well-being of learners first – before any organisational or personal goals and before any loyalty to colleagues and friends.
- Help and assist in developing a culture in which any member of staff can feel comfortable about pointing out to another member of staff that his/her behaviour is or may have been inappropriate.
- Be committed to actively preventing the exploitation and abuse of young or vulnerable learners.
- Respect all individual learners regardless of any protected characteristic (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), ability and treat each individual learner with respect and dignity.
- Respect each learners' boundaries and help them to develop their own sense of rights, as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel there is a problem.

The focus of your relationship with a learner you have met through the course of your work should always remain professional and you should always act in a professional manner. You should never develop a personal relationship, and you should avoid socialising with learners on occasions where it does not constitute part of your normal duties and avoid establishing relationships through the use of social media such as Face book or Twitter.

It is essential to have guidelines to follow in order to minimise the possibility for abuse, misunderstanding and misinterpretation. False and malicious allegations are rare but general good practice will help prevent them. The following examples will help to create a positive, transparent culture and climate.

Maintain a safe and appropriate emotional and physical distance from young or vulnerable learners.

- Do not make sexual or discriminatory comments of any kind
- Engage in rough or sexually provocative games
- Make sexual comments / innuendos
- Lending or borrowing money or property
- Exclusive or secretive relationships
- Inviting young or vulnerable learners into your home
- Inappropriate reading materials / internet use

5. Safeguarding Procedures

Sysco recognises that effective procedures and systems are required to safeguard young and vulnerable people. To support this strategy, Sysco has a Safeguarding Policy for staff and a separate one issued to all learners as part of their welcome pack.

Sysco has a Safeguarding Focus Team, the team meets quarterly and is responsible for the implementation and continuous improvement of Safeguarding systems and procedures. The team is built up of the Managing Director, Senior and Middle management across the organisation, Human Resources, Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officers.

As part of the induction process learners are given information on Safer Learning and a guide on what to do if they feel that their mental health, health, safety and general welfare is affected. All learners will be required to complete several safeguarding and prevent training modules thought, for example learners on study programme complete a variety of topics such as mental health, modern day slavery, county lines, abuse and domestic violence. This enhances their awareness on key themes and develops their knowledge and skills for life in modern day Britain.

6. Prevent Procedures

Prevent is embedded within the safeguarding process and is a priority for Sysco to ensure staff and learners are aware of The Prevent Duty and how to recognise and report any concerns.

All staff and learners are informed on their induction of Prevent and awareness is also raised further on radicalisation and extremism via hot topics.

Learners can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. This can put them at risk of being drawn into criminal activity. Here are some potential signs that may suggest a learner is/has been radicalised.

- Is there evidence of ideological, political or religious influences on the learner?
- Has there been significant shift in a learner's behaviour or outward appearance suggests a new social/political or religious influence?
- Has the learner come into conflict with others over religious beliefs, lifestyle or dress choice?
- Has the learner witnessed or been the perpetrator of radical or religious hate crime?

Identifying Indicators of radicalisation

- Being overly secretive about online viewing
- Displaying feelings of isolation or expressions of an 'us and them'
- Becoming more argumentative or domineering in their viewpoints, being quick to condemn those who disagree and ignoring views that contradict their own
- Questioning their faith or identity.
- Downloading or promotion extremist content.
- Social isolation – losing interest in activities they used to enjoy, distancing themselves from friends and social groups
- Altered appearance – change in style of dress and/or personal appearance.
- Abnormal routines, travel patterns or aspirations

For further information refer to Refer to Sysco's 'Prevent and Safeguarding Process'.

7. Staying Safe Online

Our priority is for all students to safe online. Learners are given an ICT policy, use of image consent, a Training Agreement and guidelines on staying safe whilst online. Learners also have the opportunity to enhance their awareness of online safety via training modules and hot topics.

The ICT policy has been reviewed to incorporate any associated risks with radicalisation and extremism. Sysco has also obtained advice from an appropriate external organisation on enhanced web filtering systems and has developed systems due to this, resulting in less associated risks with staff and learners accessing in appropriate or extremist material. Staff must adhere to the following when using a virtual learning platform with learners:

- Where possible a waiting room should be used at all times.
- The virtual teaching room should be locked with the teacher having the facility to remove participants should the situation arise.
- Learners should not be able to meet on the virtual learning platform without a teacher/staff member present.
- Staff should be able to see all learners present on the device that is being used.
- Recommend recording sessions for everyone's safety. All staff should advise learners at the start of the session of the intend to record and clarify everyone present has understood.
- It is also recommended a digital survey with learners is undertaken to assess at home online learning capabilities and they have a device that is suitable for online learning.

Tutors hold the responsibility for ensuring learners are fully conversant of Sysco's commitment in Safer Learning and promote awareness as part of the Learner Review process, induction and curriculum implementation.

Where a Tutor/Designated Safeguarding Officers has an identified concern with either safeguarding, prevent or online safety there is a clear structure in place which provides clear and consistent support, guidance and monitoring from the Safeguarding and Prevent Lead and with support from the central safeguarding team. All of which are logged on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System) which is also managed and supported by the central safeguarding team.

Confidentiality and sharing information

Staff will only discuss concerns with a member of the safeguarding team or Managing Director. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

The Seven Golden Rules for Safeguarding Information Sharing

- Data Protection/Human rights laws are not a barrier
- Be open and honest. (unless unsafe or inappropriate)
- Seek advice. (anonymise if necessary)
- Share with consent if appropriate
- Consider safety and wellbeing
- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure.
- Keep a record of decision and reason for it

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) does not prevent staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. Ideally information sharing will be done in writing so that there is an evidence trail. Where information is shared the DSL will ensure they can identify who is requesting the information before sharing and then record what has been shared, when why and with whom.

Sysco's Safeguarding Officers are responsible for providing information, advice and guidance to staff on Safeguarding issues. They will ensure complaints of abuse, unfair treatment, harassment, bullying or suspected radicalisation continues to be dealt with promptly and in accordance with set procedures. Refer to Sysco's 'Prevent and Safeguarding Process'.

Sysco will ensure through its mental health support team any concerns or support required for mental health is actioned by the assigned mental health first aider. The Sysco Group Wellbeing Code outlines key information for support with mental health.

Sysco will ensure that sub-contractors working with young, inexperienced or vulnerable people have appropriate procedures and systems in place to ensure they comply in the same way as Sysco and review procedures, practices and safe systems to ensure compliance. Sysco will also ensure DBS checks take place and are monitored where necessary. Where identified individual risk assessments may be undertaken to prove the company's commitment to health and safety and to ensure that suitable arrangements are considered and implemented prior to the young or vulnerable person starting work.

8. Communication

Safeguarding forms part of the Company Communication Strategy. The focus team including key staff and subcontractors meet quarterly to review the aim of the strategy and ensure systems and procedures are reviewed.

A number of people have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection, appropriate to the level at which they operate. These duties will be reviewed annually.

CPD of Safeguarding will be monitored by HR and the Safeguarding Officer; updates will be communicated during focus team meetings.

Safeguarding Officers and the Safeguarding Focus Team review and update the safer learning procedures and communicate this with all staff. Ongoing developments will be discussed at team meetings and forwarded to higher management for consideration.

As part of our safeguarding and prevent strategy we also aim to;

- Sysco will continue to promote health and wellbeing, safety awareness and empowering learners with learning which could encompass; physical and mental health, sexual health, drugs awareness, alcohol awareness, resilience, equality and diversity, safe from accident or injury, safe from abuse, safe from bullying and discrimination, being safe online, enjoying & attending, good educational standards, achieving qualifications, excellent support facilities.
- Sysco are working in partnership with other organisations in relation to child protection and will support this commitment by providing training to key staff to help and support learners with any issues they may face.
- Sysco will provide ongoing information, advice and guidance to raise awareness of Safeguarding. Sysco will ensure Learners are aware of Safeguarding procedures and the route to follow when raising concerns.

9. Monitoring of Safeguarding and Prevent Strategy

Sysco will monitor the impact of the Safeguarding Strategy and Policies during the Senior Managers and Safeguarding meeting.

Records of Safeguarding incidents will continue to be audited regularly to assess the support provided and establish if the correct procedures have been followed. Results of audits will be logged and common themes or areas of improved will be addressed on an ongoing basis.

Sysco will continue to log and monitor the volume of Safeguarding incidents, and the impact of the support provided. Safeguarding data will be analysed by the Senior Management and Safeguarding teams including identifying patterns, trends and providing guidance from these . Where necessary improvement action plans will be put in place.

SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT STRATEGY; ADDENDUM

Safeguarding Information, Advice and Guidance

How do we define Young / Vulnerable learners?

- Young learners are defined as any learner who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act SVGA (2006) no longer labels adults as 'vulnerable' because of the setting in which an activity is received, nor because of the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult receiving the activities.

The definition of regulated activity as explained within the Protection of Freedoms Act

2012 Identifies the activities provided to any adult which, if any adult requires them, will mean that the adult will be considered 'vulnerable' at that particular time.

Definition and types of Abuse and/or Neglect

This section closely reflects the procedures and guidance in the Liverpool Safeguarding Children Board and the Home Office document "*Working Together to Safeguard Children*" 2026.

'Child abuse and neglect' is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of young and vulnerable learners, including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the persons health or development.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a young or vulnerable learner. Somebody may abuse a young or vulnerable learner by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm.

Young or vulnerable learners may be abused in the family or an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. An adult or adults or another child or children may abuse them.

The four broad categories of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Physical Abuse

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

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their development. It may involve conveying to the person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed in them.

These may include interactions that are beyond the person's developmental capacity, as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them participating in normal social interactions. It may involve serious bullying causing the person frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of persons. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, including Prostitution, whether or not the person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving them in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour.

Neglect

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet person's basic or physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health and 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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a person from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caretakers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsive to, a person's basic emotional needs.

Additional types of abuse and unsafe activities which we recognise, and which have become more prevalent in recent times are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ■ Bullying and Harassment | ■ Discriminatory Abuse |
| ■ Alcohol and Drugs | ■ Financial Abuse |
| ■ Crime | ■ Domestic Violence |
| ■ Cyber Bullying | |

Identifying Indicators of possible abuse

When considering whether there is enough information and evidence to suggest a young or vulnerable learner has been abused, there are a number of possible indicators. However, there may also be a perfectly reasonable explanation, so it is important to remain vigilant but not be overzealous nor jump to conclusions. There may also be no signs or indicators of abuse, however this does not necessarily mean that a report of abuse is false.

Identifying Indicators of physical abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that have occurred on parts of the body which are unusual and not indicative of a fall or because of playing a contact / rough sport etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, unkempt appearance, dirty clothes etc
- Changes in routine

Identifying Indicators of sexual abuse

- Any allegation made by an individual
- Individuals with an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Individuals who are sexually provocative or seductive
- Severe sleeping disorders
- Eating disorders

Signs suggesting emotional abuse

- Changes or regressions in mood or behaviour
- Nervousness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away

Some current Issues

The Use of Technology

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-a-connected-world> from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age specific resources.

Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment between schools and colleges

This is advice provided by the Department for Education. Its focus is child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment at schools and colleges (peer on peer abuse). The advice covers children of all ages, from the primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. For the purposes of this advice, a child is anyone under the age of 18. Whilst the focus of the advice is on protecting and supporting children, schools and colleges should of course protect any adult students and engage with adult social care, support services and the police as required. The advice sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment is, how to minimise the risk of it occurring and what to do when it does occur or is alleged to have occurred. The advice highlights best practice and cross-references other advice, statutory guidance and the legal framework.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance (part 5 of KCSIE 2025):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

Sharing nudes and semi nudes

In the latest advice for schools and colleges (UKCIS, 2020), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year-olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance:

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Sexting

Sexting is the sending of provocative or sexual photos, messages or videos. They are generally sent using a mobile phone but can also include posting this type of material online. While sharing suggestive images or text messages may seem like innocent flirting or be considered funny for young people, sexting can have serious social and legal consequences.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance;

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551575/6.2439_KG_NCA_Sexting_in_Schools_WEB_1_.PDF

Upskirting

Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals, buttocks or underwear. Perpetrators can face two years in prison and most serious offenders placed on the sex offenders register (Voyeurism Act, April 2019).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upsirting-know-your-rights>

Revenge Porn

Revenge Porn is the sharing of private, sexual materials, either photos or videos, of another person, without their consent and with the purpose of causing embarrassment or distress. Those found guilty of it, can be sentenced to up to 2 years in prison and a fine.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revenge-porn>

Domestic Violence (including coercive control)

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour on the part of the abuser designed to control their partner. It can happen at any point in a relationship, including after you have split up. Anyone forced to change their behaviour because they are frightened of their partner or ex-partner's reaction is experiencing abuse. Domestic abuse is a crime.

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/What-is-abuse>

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. Coercive behaviour is a continuing act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-or-coercive-behaviour-statutory-guidance-framework/controlling-or-coercive-behaviour-statutory-guidance-framework-accessible>

Child Sexual Exploitation CSE

Involves exploitative situations where a child, male or female, receives something from an adult as a result of engaging in sexual activity. This can be seemingly 'consensual' relationships to serious organised crime gangs. There will be an imbalance of power where the perpetrator holds power over the victim. Technology is often used. This is a serious crime. The police team can be contacted for extra support and information.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance;

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/>

Criminal Exploitation of children and adults at risk

Criminal exploitation of children and adults at risk is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. County lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". It involves child criminal exploitation (CCE) as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626770/6_3505_HO_Child_exploitation_FINAL_web_2_.pdf

Modern slavery and human trafficking

Modern Slavery is the term used within the UK and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking. These crimes include holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance; <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking>

Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement whereby a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child has a disability) is placed for 28 days or more in the care of someone who is not the child's parent(s) or a 'connected person'. The local authority needs to be satisfied that the placement is suitable, and the child is safe.

Sysco will follow the updated guidance;

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274414/Children Act 1989 private fostering.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274414/Children_Act_1989_private_fostering.pdf)

Honour Based Violence HBV – e.g., FGM/Forced Marriage.

Female Genital Mutilation FGM

This illegal and a form of child abuse. It involves a procedure to remove all or some of the female genitalia or any other injury to these organs. A mandatory reporting duty for FGM requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under 18-year-olds to the police. The FGM duty came into force on 31 October 2015.

Multi agency guidelines;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800306/6-1914-HO-Multi_Agency_Statutory_Guidance.pdf

Forced Marriage

Is illegal and a form of child abuse. A marriage entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, where violence, threats or coercion is used.

Multi agency guidelines;

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES v1 180614 FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf)

GDPR

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately. If the designated person for safeguarding has concerns regarding a young person or adult at risk welfare, they should share the information with the appropriate agencies in line with the Sysco Group and local procedures. Security of information sharing must always be considered. If it is considered a crime has been committed if the child or adult at risk is at immediate risk, the police should be notified immediately.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information sharing advice practitioners safeguarding services.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)

Management of Safeguarding Incident

Response to Incidents

Definitions

1. Safeguarding Children

Defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they grow up in safe, effective care.

2. Safeguarding Adults

Under the Care Act 2014, this applies to any person aged 18 or over who has

Child/Adult is at immediate risk

- Call 999 and stay with the child/adult.
- Confidentiality not promised.
- Listen to victim, non-judgementally.
- Two staff present, one being the Designated Safeguarding Officer, (reported to the DSL or member of the central safeguarding team as soon as possible) and record on CPOMS.
- Victim sensitively informed about referral to other agencies.
- If victim does not give consent to share, staff may still lawfully share in order to protect child/adult from harm and to promote their

Child Adult is not at immediate risk

- Ensure child/adult is safe.
- Confidentiality not promised.
- Listen to child/adult, non-judgementally.
- Report incident to Designated Safeguarding Officer. Designated Safeguarding Officer to follow up and to record on CPOMS and alert Central Safeguarding Team.

You can share information without consent if an adult is at risk of serious harm or death. Confidentiality can be legally and ethically overridden in emergencies, if the person lacks mental capacity, or if there is a risk of a crime being committed or others being

1. Always act in the best interests of the child.
2. Never promise confidentiality to the child.
3. Record facts, not assumptions.
4. All staff must know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is.
5. Every concern must be taken seriously – no exceptions.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Case-by-case basis

Central Safeguarding Team/ DSL assesses the risks and decides next steps, providing feedback, advice and support within 24 hours. Consider if external agencies need to be contacted, escalate if required and initiate internal safeguarding process and incident to safeguarding and prevent log managed and monitored by DSL.

INCIDENT RECORDING ON CPOMS

- What happened?
- When/where?
- Who was present?
- Exact words disclosed?
- Any external agency involvement?
- Staff/DSO actions?

All recording must be accurate, comprehensive details of concern, rationale for any decisions with clear actions taken and timely follow up monitor.

SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT MONITORING

- Central safeguarding team to agree appropriate staff to attend any applicable external agency meetings i.e. looked after child, child protection.
- It is important that the central safeguarding team are aware of all external agency meetings taking place regarding the safety and wellbeing of a child/ adult at risk.
- Record and keep up to date with all external agencies including external agency i.e. social services, police. It is important all communication is logged in CPOMS and is timely and up to date.
- Record and keep up to date any internal support i.e. mental health first aid, Tutor/DSO one to one meetings etc. It is important all communication is logged in CPOMS and is timely and up to date.
- All incident outcome's must be detailed, factual and include outcome of incident investigation and reason for closure.

CLOSURE AND REVIEW

- Central Safeguarding Team/DSL will agree with the DSO closure of incident, of which record on CPOMS must detail outcome of investigation, date of closure.
 - Incidents may be reopened at any time.
- The Central Safeguarding Team/DSL may provide advice, guidance and next steps to DSO/Staff.
- The Central Safeguarding Team/DSL will review all incidents, including reflecting and sharing on practice and to support staff continuous professional development.