



## Safeguarding Summary 2023/2024

If you require this document in an alternative language or as an audio file, please contact:  
[amina.sheta@bigcreative.education](mailto:amina.sheta@bigcreative.education).

### Key safeguarding contacts at the Big Creative Academy

#### Designated Safeguarding Leads:

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**SENCO:**

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**Deputy Designated safeguarding lead and Designated Person for Looked-After Children:**

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**Link Governor for Safeguarding:**

John Stone

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**Principal of the Academy:**

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### **Key contacts within the Local Authority:**

#### **Waltham Forest MASH team (multi-agency safeguarding hub)**

**Telephone:** 020 8496 2310

**Email:** [MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk)

A team of professionals from healthcare, education, police and social care who work together to keep children and young people who live in Waltham Forest safe.

#### **Waltham Forest LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**

The LADO for Waltham forest :

Caroline Coyston – LADO & Safeguarding in Education Team Manager - 07770 052 421

Susannah Bennett – LADO & Safeguarding In Education Assistant Team Manager - 07767 161 200

Jennifer Knight - Early Years Safeguarding Lead – 07866 314 144

Tel: 020 8496 3646

Email: [LADO@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@walthamforest.gov.uk)

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Professionals who ensure that any allegation into a person in a position of trust for a child is looked into.

#### **Introduction:**

Big Creative Academy's safeguarding policy is a document that acknowledges risks that are present to young people, along with how we aim to keep staff and students safe.

#### **Definitions:**

Child/young person- refers to a student who is under the age of 18.

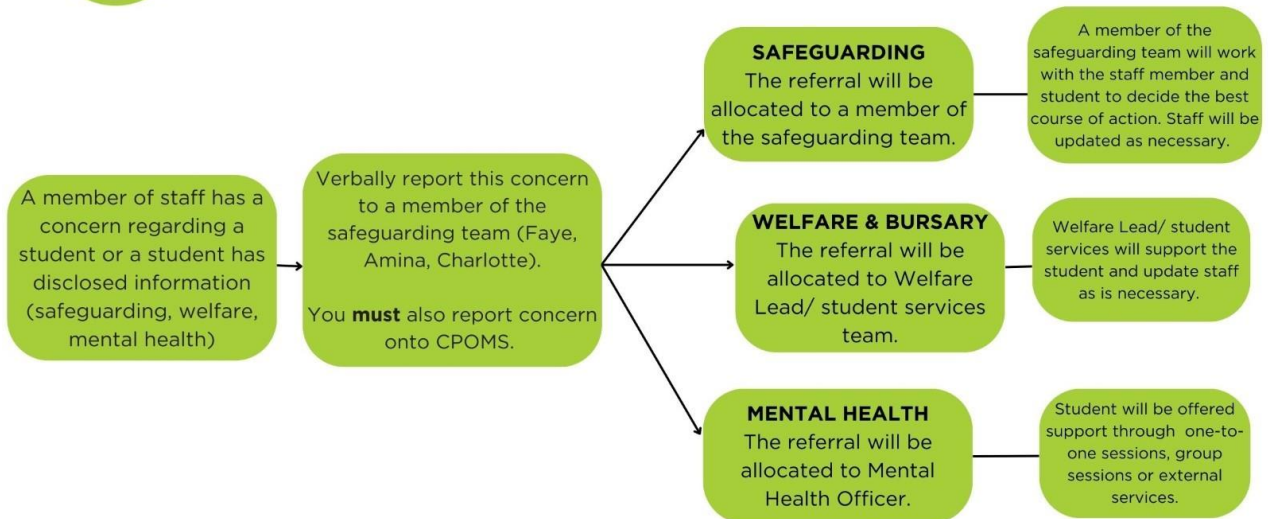
#### **Procedures:**

If any member of staff at Big Creative Academy have concerns regarding a student they have a duty of care to report this to the safeguarding team immediately.

Concerns are shared with the team verbally with details also documented in a secure program.



## REPORTING A MENTAL HEALTH, WELFARE (inc BURSARY), SAFEGUARDING CONCERN



**SEND and EHCP:** please refer any SEND support needs directly to Hyacinth Slowley.

**Please ensure that students are aware of referrals you make. We aim to keep students involved and aware of decisions that are made about them and their lives**

### Partnership/ contact with parents and carers

It is likely that contact will be made with parents/carers of any student who is under the age of 18 and experiencing a safeguarding issue/ has a level of risk. We aim to work with students during this process as we understand that sometimes, communicating with parents/carers about potential risks can be a challenging situation for young people that requires support.

When working to support students who are aged 18 and above, we will require consent from the student in question to contact parents/carers to discuss concerns and any support or intervention. Referrals to local authority Early Help and/ or Social Care must always be discussed with parents/carers before, unless, in doing so will put the young person at risk of harm.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of staff working or volunteering at Big Creative Academy have a duty of care to ensure that students are kept safe from harm. All staff are provided safeguarding training annually, refreshing their knowledge on emerging risks and how to spot signs of abuse and exploitation. The



Designated Safeguarding Leads and wider student services team will lead on a support plan for any students with safeguarding/welfare concerns.

#### **Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that the Academy is a safe place for students and staff to attend. The DSL will lead on staff training and also involved in decision-making for any safeguarding cases. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always ensure that they consider the voice of the young person when implementing strategies and plans to promote the safety and wellbeing of young people, whether this is at college, at home or in their community.

#### **Link Governor for Safeguarding:**

We work with our link Governor for Safeguarding who is John Stone. John Stone ensures that the safeguarding team are working to best practice, ensuring that processes and policies are in place to keep our students and staff safe.

#### **Training for Staff:**

Big Creative Academy delivers safeguarding training annually to all staff. This training is delivered to ensure that all individuals who are working with young people have up-to-date knowledge on safeguarding risks that young people may be subject to including abuse, radicalisation, exploitation, mental health etc.

#### **Online Safety:**

Big Creative Academy recognises that there are risks that children and young people face online. Students will receive sessions around online safety in their wellbeing program, highlighting online risks and how to report online grooming and sexual harassment.

#### **Online Filters:**

To ensure that young people are not accessing harmful, violent or inappropriate content online whilst at college, we use a monitoring and filtering system that will block any key words considered to be harmful from our network. Students and staff are required to sign into our filtering network in order to use the WIFI on-site. All students will also be asked to sign an 'Acceptable Use Policy' which outlines how students are expected to use technology in a safe manner.

Students who are found to have broken the 'Acceptable Use Agreement' may be subject to disciplinary action. Staff will report any concerns relating to a young person's use of technology to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Regular checks of our monitoring and filtering system are conducted by the Designated Safeguarding Leads to highlight and identify any concerning websites and/or keywords that are being searched by staff and students.

For more information, please see Big Creative Academy's Online Safety Policy.

#### **Education at Home/ Educated Off-site:**

There may be occasions when a student will complete their study program from home. There can be various reasons why a student may be instructed to continue their education from home which can include, but not limited to: behavioural concerns, safeguarding risks, medical issues and exclusion.



In the event that this arrangement is advised, the Curriculum Manager for the student's subject area will liaise with the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead to confirm arrangements, ensure suitability and to consider possible risk-factors for students to learn from home. Big Creative Academy will make every effort to ensure that remote learning is carefully considered; there must be clear reasons why a student is instructed to continue their education at home.

#### **Arrangements for Students Educated Off-Site:**

Students who will be continuing their qualification from home will receive remote support from their Tutor to ensure that they fully understand what is expected of them from a curriculum aspect. Tutors must also notify parents/carers for any learners under the age of 18 (or above with student's consent) of the expectations, outlining work that must be completed along with deadlines for submission. Frequency and method of contact during this time will be agreed by the Tutor and student.

Occasion might arise when a student who is educated off-site may need to attend the Academy. This may be required to allow students to sit their exams, access specialist resources and complete any practical assessments and/or observations. Students must sign-in at reception on occasions like this for health & safety reasons.

Tutors will maintain contact with students during their time learning from home, it is important that students are provided with any information or resources they may need to complete their study program at home.

#### **External Agencies, Contractors, Visitors & Volunteers:**

All members of staff working at Big Creative Academy have been subject to a number of checks to ensure suitability to work with young people.

#### **Site Security:**

All learners and staff should be able to feel safe when they are in the Academy.

It is important that all students and staff display their ID card at all times. This ID card must be facing the correct way, ensuring that photo and student details are easily read. ID cards are a way of keeping our students safe and must be adhered to at all times. If a student continuously does not adhere to rules around ID cards, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

The entrance to the Academy remains locked, staff and students must use their ID cards to gain access to the building and outside areas. Staff and students must also scan their ID cards to enter the turnstiles at reception. Visitors must be granted access to the site by a member of staff, it is also important that all visitors sign-in at reception and clearly display a visitor badge during their time on-site,

Big Creative Academy have a dedicated security team on-site to ensure that the college is a safe environment for our students. Security members will be based at the entrance and will also conduct walks around campus throughout the day.



### **Use of college premises for non-college activities:**

The Academy will often hire the premises out to external organisations (community groups, sports associations or services-providers that run extra-curricular activities).

If the Academy receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our premises for the purpose of running activities for children our own safeguarding policy and procedures will apply, including informing the LADO of any concerns relating to members of staff.

### **PROCESS**

#### **Supporting learners and teaching learners on how to stay safe:**

Students have the opportunity to learn about safeguarding and how to identify risks and keep themselves safe through our wellbeing program.

Safety themes feature throughout the year with a focus on safeguarding modules in term 1.

Topics around safety include:

- Abuse
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Online Safety
- Substance Awareness
- Healthy Relationships
- Radicalisation & PREVENT

#### **Categories of abuse:**

The four main categories of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

#### **Student services and safeguarding induction:**

All students starting their course at BCA will receive a student services and safeguarding induction from the team and DSL. This induction will provide students with the opportunity to meet the support team and ask any questions about safety/support at BCA.

#### **PREVENT and anti-radicalisation training:**





The Prevent programme is early intervention support provided to address the personal and social factors which make people more receptive to radicalisation, and to divert them away from being drawn into violent ideologies and criminal behaviour.

The Academy is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults in our school recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children or not.

Staff will be alert to issues including:

- Disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- All staff and students will receive a session around radicalisation and extremism. Sessions on British Values are also delivered through our wellbeing program.

If the DSL has concerns relating to a student adopting extremist/radicalised ideologies and/or viewpoints we will seek advice from Waltham Forest's PREVENT Lead Amy Strode on how to proceed to ensure the student receives support and education around their suspected radicalisation.

Students at the Academy will learn about radicalisation and extremism through our wellbeing curriculum. The Academy wellbeing program also delivers sessions on British Values; The Rule of Law, Mutual Respect and Tolerance, Individual Liberty and Democracy.

#### **Safer schools officer:**

Schools and colleges in Waltham Forest work with Safer Schools Officers. The role of these officers is to provide support to staff around any potential criminal concerns or safety risks relating to students at the Academy.

#### **Role of college in Early Help process**

*"Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence."* - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

The Academy will work with students and their families when making referrals to local authority Early Help and will support any strategies that are set-out by Family Practitioners.



### **Professional confidentiality**

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a learner nor should they agree with a learner to keep a secret, as where there is a safeguarding concern this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding safeguarding on a “need to know basis” or around any student at risk of sexual violence, harassment or child on child abuse. Where sharing will be in the best interests of the relevant learner, information will be shared with other organisations.

### **Records and monitoring**

All records relating to the safeguarding, welfare and mental health of students is logged on a secure platform with only relevant members of staff having access to view this information.

### **Referral**

All staff at Big Creative Academy are aware of the referral process and procedures for sharing concerns around students and requesting support.

If the Academy are unable to provide appropriate and/or specialist support/intervention or investigation, referrals to external services may be required to ensure that students are receiving the care and intervention that is required (e.g; social care, early help, mental health services, drug misuse services, housing, police etc).

### **Use of Reasonable Force**

Academy staff (including support staff, non-teaching staff and voluntary staff) are able to use such force as is reasonable and proportionate to the risk that presents in the circumstances to prevent a learner from:

- Committing an offence;
- Causing personal injury to any person (including themselves) or damage to any property;
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the Academy
- This includes occasions when the learner is not on Academy premises e.g. on Academy visits.
- ‘Reasonable’ in these circumstances means ‘using no more force than is needed’. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil’s path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

Big Creative Academy recognises that reasonable force should be considered especially carefully when dealing with learners with SEN, disabilities or medical conditions. These groups are particularly vulnerable and the staff should refer to individual learning plans as necessary.





### **Risk assessments of trips and visits:**

All extended and off- site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection, Health & safety, and whistleblowing arrangements are in place.

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the Academy, our safeguarding policy and procedures apply.

### **Professional relationships:**

Big Creative Academy recognises that positive professional relationships with learners will support and promote the best outcomes for them. The Academy gives guidance on the expectations of staff in this matter to which all staff are expected to adhere. Good professional boundaries safeguard learners and safeguard professionals from unfounded allegations.

A professional relationship exists where a member of staff is responsible for assessing, supervising, tutoring, teaching or providing pastoral support, administrative or technical support. Maintaining this professional relationship is vital to the educational development and achievement of its students.

### **Personal relationships:**

The Academy strongly disapproves of personal/sexual relationships between staff and students who are 19 or under or any student considered to be vulnerable, regardless of whether a professional relationship exists. Entering into such a relationship will be considered to be gross misconduct and will be investigated under the Academy Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

The Academy strongly disapproves of personal relationships between staff and students above the age of 19 where a professional relationship exists. Such relationships must be reported to the relevant line manager, so that appropriate steps can be taken to ensure that s/he is no longer in a professional role in connection with that particular student. Failure to report the said relationship may lead to disciplinary action, depending on the individual circumstances of the case. Where no professional relationship exists between staff and student, a personal relationship should be reported to the line manager in order to protect everyone's interests.

### **Safe touch policy:**

The Academy recognises that in certain Performing Arts disciplines, e.g. Dance, it is necessary for the tutor to physically touch a learner to improve their understanding of the exercise or movement.

See 'Safe Touch' Policy for further information.



### **Photography and Images**

To protect students, we will:

- Seek their consent for photographs or video images to be taken, including consent for the reasons for which photos will be used and how long they will be kept as per Data Protection legislation.
- Seek parental consent for the those under 18 years old
- Ensure students are appropriately dressed
- Encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs/images that are taken of them.

### **Education at home/ Educated off-site**

There may be some occasions where a student will be asked to continue their course from home. Students may be educated off-site for many reasons including; behavioural concerns and/or safeguarding concerns. In the event of a student being educated off-site, their tutor and any other relevant staff will ensure the student receives regular communication and support to allow them to complete their qualification. Arrangements will be made for students to return to site who will be taking exams.

### **Allegations against staff**

The Academy acknowledges that there are two levels of allegation/concern:

- Allegations that may meet the harms threshold.
- Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – otherwise referred to as ‘low-level concerns’.

Where a staff member, volunteer or supply staff is accused of abuse, the Principal should in the first instance contact the Safeguarding in Education Service. If the allegation is not of abuse then the Academy’s normal Disciplinary Policy and Procedure will apply.

Through discussion and consultation with the Safeguarding in Education Service, a decision will be made whether to make a referral to local authority Children’s Social Care and/or the police. Where the allegation is against a member of the senior management team the Principal will take this action. Where the allegation is against the Principal, the Chair of Governors will take this action.

The member of staff against whom the allegation is made will be kept informed about the allegation and the progress of the complaint, unless to do so may cause the risk harm to the complainant. If after discussion with the Safeguarding in Education Service it is decided that a referral to local authority social services or police is not appropriate, it may still be necessary to address matters in accordance with the Academy’s Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.



### **VULNERABLE STUDENTS:**

Big Creative Academy aims to support our cohort of vulnerable students to support them during their time studying with us. Student Services department will issue a questionnaire to students during their induction week to help identify any areas of need.

#### **Vulnerable students include those who:**

- Have an EHCP
- Have any other additional learning needs
- Are a looked-after-child or a care-leaver
- Young Carer
- Young people on Child in Need and Child Protection Plans
- Students with mental health difficulties
- Students who have parents that struggle with substance misuse
- Students who have parents that have mental health difficulties
- Asylum Seeker children and young people
- Students who are supported by Social Care/YOT/Early Help

#### **Learners with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities**

The Academy recognizes that learners with special educational needs may be more susceptible to abuse and staff members are aware that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability.

All staff will take into account that changes in behaviour and/ or demeanour may not necessarily be linked to their disability but to consider the potential for abuse as a reason for these changes.

The Academy understands that there is a higher risk of peer group isolation, bullying and difficulties with communication for learners who have educational needs.

The DSL, Inclusion Manager and Student Services department liaise and work together to minimize the potential of abuse and recognize any signs of abuse or change in behaviour.

#### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Contextual safeguarding is about understanding a young person's life as whole, in all its elements. In order to consider and recognise any threats towards a student's safety, we must consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

E.G: A young person may have no risks present to them at college, in their community or at home. However, their online behaviours may pose a risk to their safety. The DSL and safeguarding team will consider contextual safeguarding and assess level of risk in all aspects of a student's life.



## SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

### Honour Based Abuse: Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. Forced marriage is illegal in the UK. It is a form of domestic abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on a person to marry can take different forms:

- physical pressure might take the form of threats or violence (including sexual violence)
- emotional or psychological pressure might take the form of making someone feel they are bringing shame on their family, making them believe that those close to them may become vulnerable to illness if they don't marry, or denying them freedom or money unless they agree to the marriage

When the person who is to get married is aged under 18, doing anything to make them marry is a crime - it doesn't have to be pressure. In some cases, people may be taken abroad without knowing that they are to be married. When they arrive in that country, their passport(s)/travel documents may be taken to try to stop them from returning to the UK.

### Honour Based Abuse: Female Genital Mutilation

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

FGM refers to procedures of any alteration involving partial or total removal of the external female genital organs. The procedure may lead to short term and long-lasting harmful consequences such as death, trauma, infections, flashbacks, infertility, kidney problems, sexual dysfunctions, incontinence, post-traumatic stress disorder etc.

If staff have a concern relating to FGM (whether this is historical or a present risk) they must report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who has a mandatory duty to report these concerns to the police and Children's Social Care (if under the age of 18).

### Private fostering

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 for children with a disability) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer.

*(Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023)*



Such arrangements may come to the attention of BCA staff through the normal course of their interaction and promotion of learning activities with students. Private fostering arrangements will only apply to learners with Educational Health and Care Plans and as an educational provider, we must notify student's local authority if we are aware of any private fostering arrangements taking place to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is safe and suitable for the young person.

### **Child trafficking**

Child trafficking is the recruitment and movement of children for the purpose of exploitation. It is a form of child abuse. Identifying if a child has been trafficked is not easy. Trafficked children are often hidden; they may be scared or unaware that they have been trafficked. There is a wide variety of reasons why children are trafficked to the UK, including:

- sexual exploitation work or labour exploitation
- domestic servitude in private homes criminal activity
- drugs trafficking
- illegal inter-country adoption forced marriage
- removal of organs.
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Traffickers can be parents, family members, organised gangs or individuals – they can be men or women.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. The harm caused to learners can be significant – through emotional and physical abuse and/or neglect. From 2006, the definition of significant harm was amended to include “the harm suffered by seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, in the home”.

### **Young carers**

You're a young carer if you're under 18 and help to look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem. If you're a young carer, you probably look after one of your parents or care for a brother or sister.

Young Carers may do extra jobs in and around the home, such as cooking, cleaning or helping someone get dressed and move around. They may also give a lot of physical help to a parent, brother or sister who's disabled or ill.

If you or your parents request it, a social worker from your local council must visit to carry out a young carer's assessment. A young carer's assessment can determine whether it's appropriate for you to care for someone else and takes into account whether you want to be a carer.



Young Carers will be supported by the student services team at Big Creative Academy and support from Young Carers organisations local to their local authority can be requested.

### **Missing persons / runaway**

Some young people are pushed away from their home by factors that make an environment difficult to live in, such as problems at home, difficult relationships, family breakdown and maltreatment or abuse, problems at the Academy including bullying and personal problems including mental health issues. Other young people are pulled away to be near friends and family or following grooming by adults for sexual exploitation or trafficking.

The Academy will support learners by enabling them to understand the dangers of running away and encourage them to seek support rather than run away; some learners run away because they feel there is no other option. Learners need to know where they can access help if they are thinking of running away and what alternatives are open to them.

Should a young person be suspected as missing the Academy will fully co-operate to determine the safety of the young person. If a young person is reported as missing to the Academy by the parent, carer or guardian we will advise that this should be reported to police. If there is refusal to do so by the parent, carer or guardian the Academy will report the missing young person to the police.

### **Absent from Education**

The Academy understands that students absent from education can be an indicator of a potential safeguarding concern including; abuse, exploitation, mental health concerns etc. There may be many reasons young people are absent from education, however, absence must be investigated with the student and their parent/carer (if under 18 years old).

### **Fabricated illness:**

Fabricated or induced illness (FI) is a rare form of child abuse. It happens when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.

The parent or carer tries to convince doctors that the child is ill, or that their condition is worse than it really is.

The parent or carer does not necessarily intend to deceive doctors, but their behaviour is likely to harm the child. For example, the child may have unnecessary treatment or tests, be made to believe they're ill, or have their education disrupted.

### **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and





consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's trust or control them through violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can happen in a short period of time.

When a child is sexually exploited online they might be persuaded or forced to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- film or stream sexual activities
- have sexual conversations.

Once an abuser has images, video or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a young person to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Sexual exploitation can be difficult to spot and sometimes mistaken for "normal" teenage behaviour. Knowing the signs can help protect children and help them when they've no one else to turn to.

Signs of CSE/sexual abuse can include:

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Being frightened of some people, places or situations.
- Being secretive.
- Sharp changes in mood or character.
- Having money or things they can't or won't explain.
- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Staying out late or overnight.
- Having a new group of friends.
- Missing from home or care, or stopping going to school or college.
- Hanging out with older people, other vulnerable people or in antisocial groups.
- Involved in a gang.
- Involved in criminal activities like selling drugs or shoplifting.

Big Creative Academy are committed to providing training for all staff on the risks of CSE and what signs to look out for to ensure that they are confident in spotting some of the potential warning signs listed below and making timely referrals to the safeguarding team.

The safeguarding team will work with young people who are at risk of CSE, external referrals may be appropriate to ensure that adequate support and intervention is in place.



## **Child on child sexual violence and Harassment**

The Academy follows government advice found at Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

The Academy's initial response to a report of child on child sexual violence or harassment is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When a learner discloses an allegation of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment from their peer this must be immediately shared with BCA Designated Safeguarding Lead who will meet with the victim to understand the nature of the incident.

The DSL will consider any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school or college.

All staff must ensure that all victims are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. When dealing with a response of sexual violence/harassment it is vital that the Academy takes into consideration the wishes of the victim, how they would like to move forward and to assure all victims that their allegation is being taken seriously.

The Safeguarding team are likely to refer cases of sexual violence and harassments to Children's Social Care to ensure that appropriate support is put in place to both educate and protect those involved. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must also complete a risk assessment if the concern is relating to an incident that took place on-site, or, if students involved both attend the Academy.

*The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. Any such professional assessments should be used to inform the schools or college's approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.*

*(Definitions taken from 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021)*

### **Upskirting:**

Upskirting is where someone takes a picture or video under a person's clothing without their permission. It is now a specific criminal offence in England and Wales. The new law will capture instances where the purpose of the behaviour is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting, where committed to obtain sexual gratification, can result in the most serious offenders being placed on the sex offenders register.



Anyone, and any gender, can be a victim and this behaviour is completely unacceptable.

Reports of upskirting will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will make appropriate decisions on the next steps of action to take, ensuring that support is provided where required. Referrals to external agencies may be required for further support/investigation.

### **Harmful Sexual behaviour**

Harmful sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people. Harmful sexual behaviour can never be passed off as 'banter'. The Academy will take all allegations of HSB seriously and recognises that this can happen both on and offline. Referrals to Children's Social Care and/or Police may be required to further investigate HSB incidents, and also provide education and support to the perpetrator and victims.

If an allegation of Harmful Sexual Behaviour/Sexual Violence/ Sexual Harassment/sexual assault is made relating to an incident that occurred on-site, a risk assessment will be completed to ensure safety of students involved.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation**

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

Children and young people may become involved in gangs for many reasons, including:

- peer pressure and wanting to fit in with their friends
- they feel respected and important
- they want to feel protected from other gangs, or bullies
- they want to make money, and are promised rewards
- they want to gain status, and feel powerful
- they've been excluded from school and don't feel they have a future

Organised criminal gangs groom children and young people because they're less suspicious and are given lighter sentences than adults.

Signs of criminal exploitation can include:

- Frequently absent from college/school.
- Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons.
- In a relationship or hanging out with someone older than them.
- Being angry, aggressive or violent.
- Being isolated or withdrawn.



- Having unexplained money and buying new things.
- Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours or getting tattoos.
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.
- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones.
- Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell.
- Taking drugs and abusing alcohol.
- Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism.
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

Staff members at the Academy receive training to help them understand the risk and identify any potential indicators for criminal exploitation. Any concerns will be shared with the safeguarding team who will work with the student to receive support. Referrals to Children's Social Care and/or the police may be required to ensure that adequate intervention and strategies (such as gang-exit) is put in place to keep the young person safe from harm.

### **Gang Violence and Gang grooming**

As part of the teaching and wellbeing offer Academy staff are well placed to pick up signs of anti-social behaviours, aggression, bullying and gang activity amongst young people and identify those at risk of harm as victims and/or the perpetrators.

If staff have concerns regarding a student's involvement within gangs they must report these concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies who will then meet with the student to understand staff concerns. If the DSL believes there is a risk to the safety of a student in relation to gang violence or grooming, a referral to the student's local authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub will be considered. The DSL may also need to refer cases onto the police for further investigation or support.

### **County lines exploitation / serious youth violence**

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".

Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs.

This can include:

- Airbnb and short term private rental properties
- budget hotels
- the home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as cuckooing.



### **Child on child abuse**

All staff at the Academy acknowledge that children can abuse other children and this may take many forms, including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- 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;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

The Academy will respond to allegations by using the steps in our disciplinary policy, taking into account case-by-case and note the need for contextual safeguarding for response. The Academy understands that child on child abuse must never be tolerated as 'banter' and will be investigated with utmost importance. Referrals to local authority Children's Social Care and the Police may be required for further investigation/support.

### **Bullying**

The Academy has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying whether it be in-person or online. Students must report to members of staff if they feel they are being bullied, providing as much detail as possible. Bullying of students does not fall in-line with our Academy Values; kindness, inclusivity, respect, authenticity and integrity. Any reports of bullying will be taken seriously and will be managed by the Senior Leadership Team with an Investigating Officer overseeing the case.

### **Mental health**

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those



whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Students who are struggling with mental health difficulties can be referred for in-house support from student services (if appropriate). If a student requires an assessment/specialist support for their needs than referrals to external organisations will be made.

### **Wellbeing Sessions**

All Academy students will receive one hour of wellbeing sessions per week. These sessions are compulsory and failure to attend may result in disciplinary action.

The wellbeing program focuses on 8 dimensions of wellness; intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social, occupational, financial, physical and environmental.

#### Wellbeing Modules:

Term 1: Safeguarding and Intellectual Wellbeing

Term 2: Social Wellbeing

Term 3: Emotional and Spiritual Wellbeing

Term 4: Physical and Environmental Wellbeing

Term 5: Financial and Occupational Wellbeing

Term 6: Supporting Next Steps